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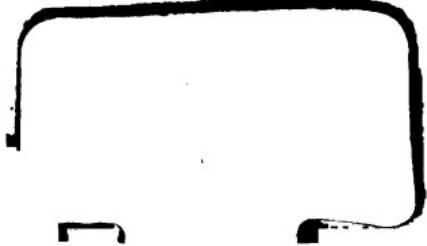
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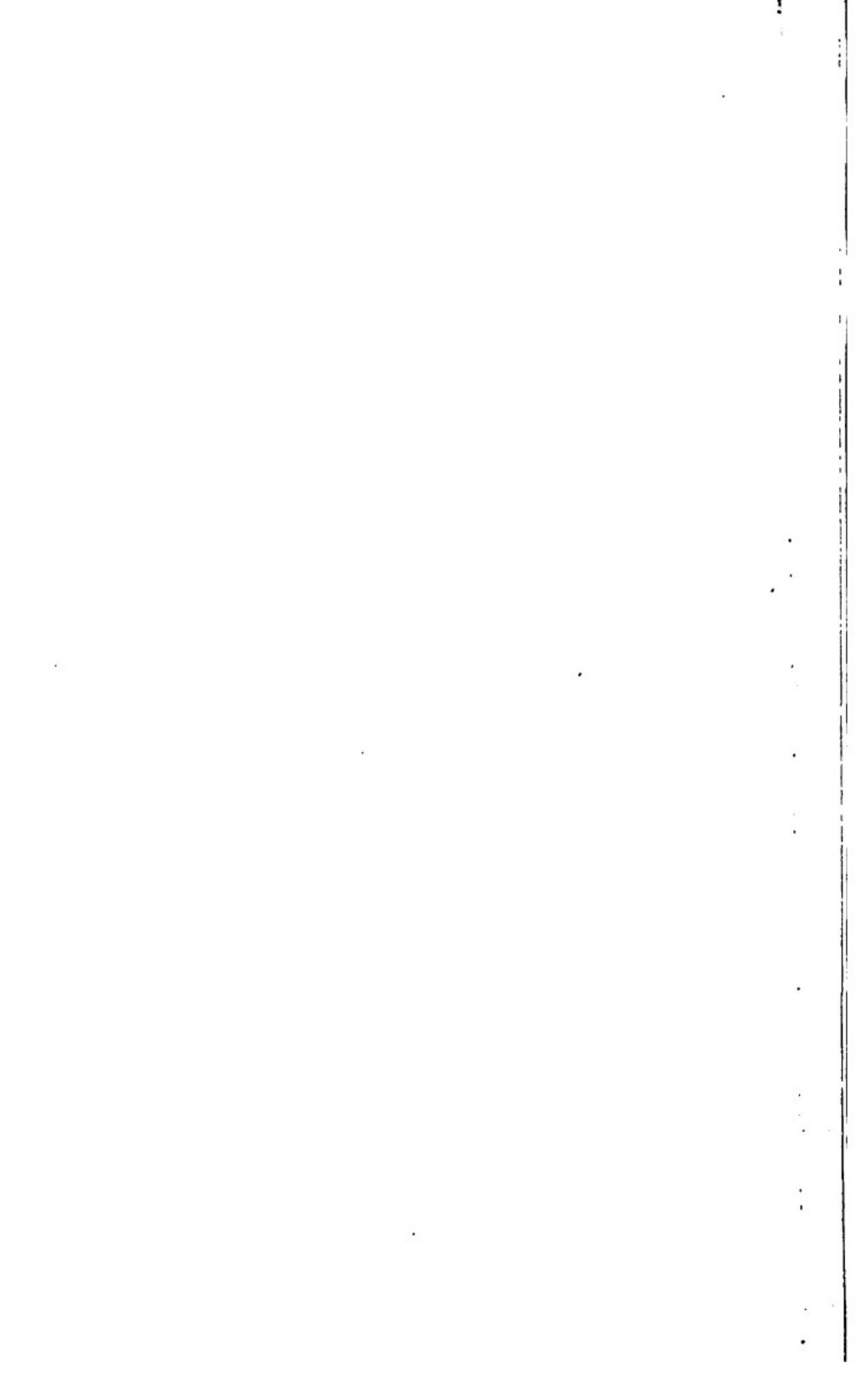
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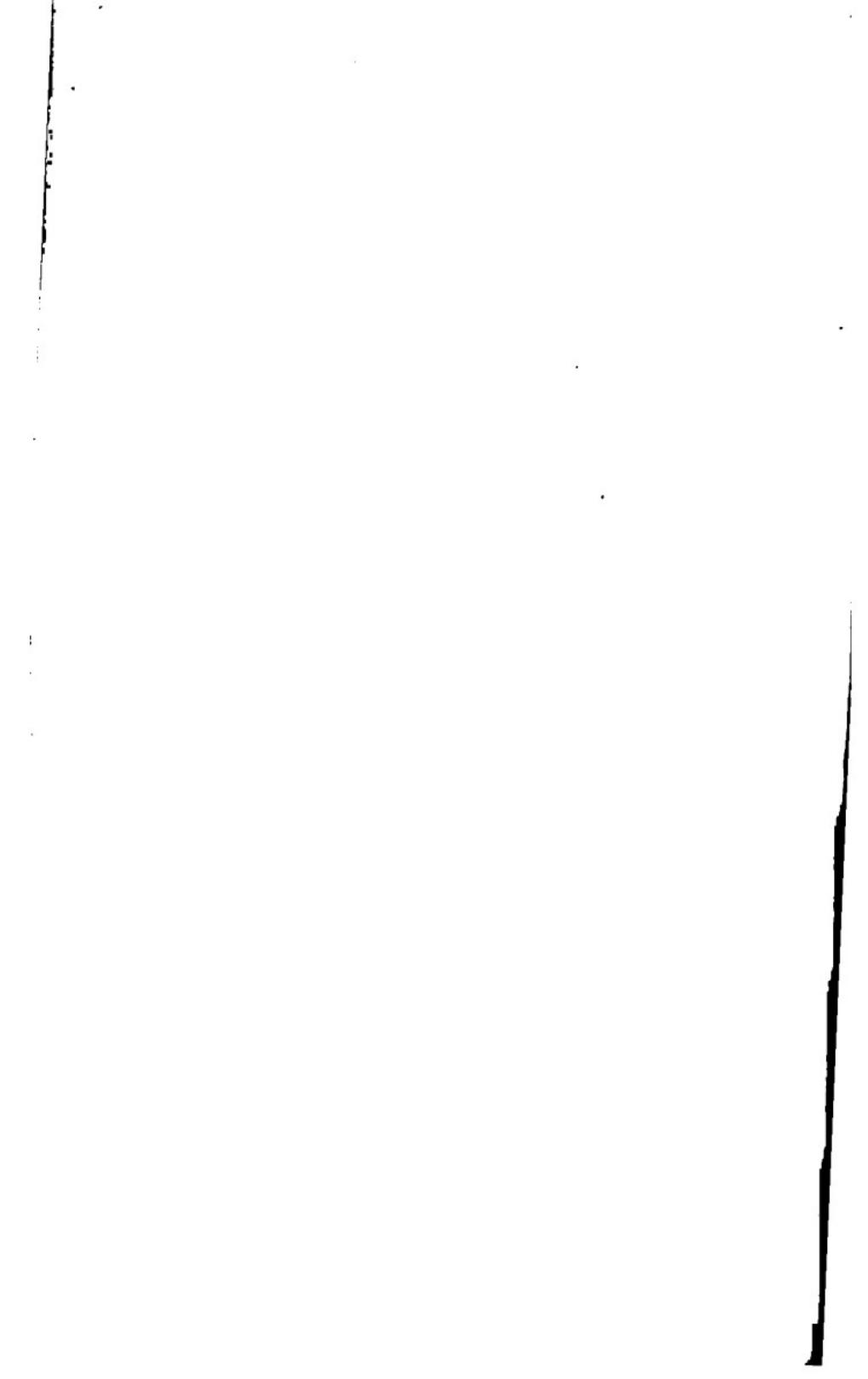


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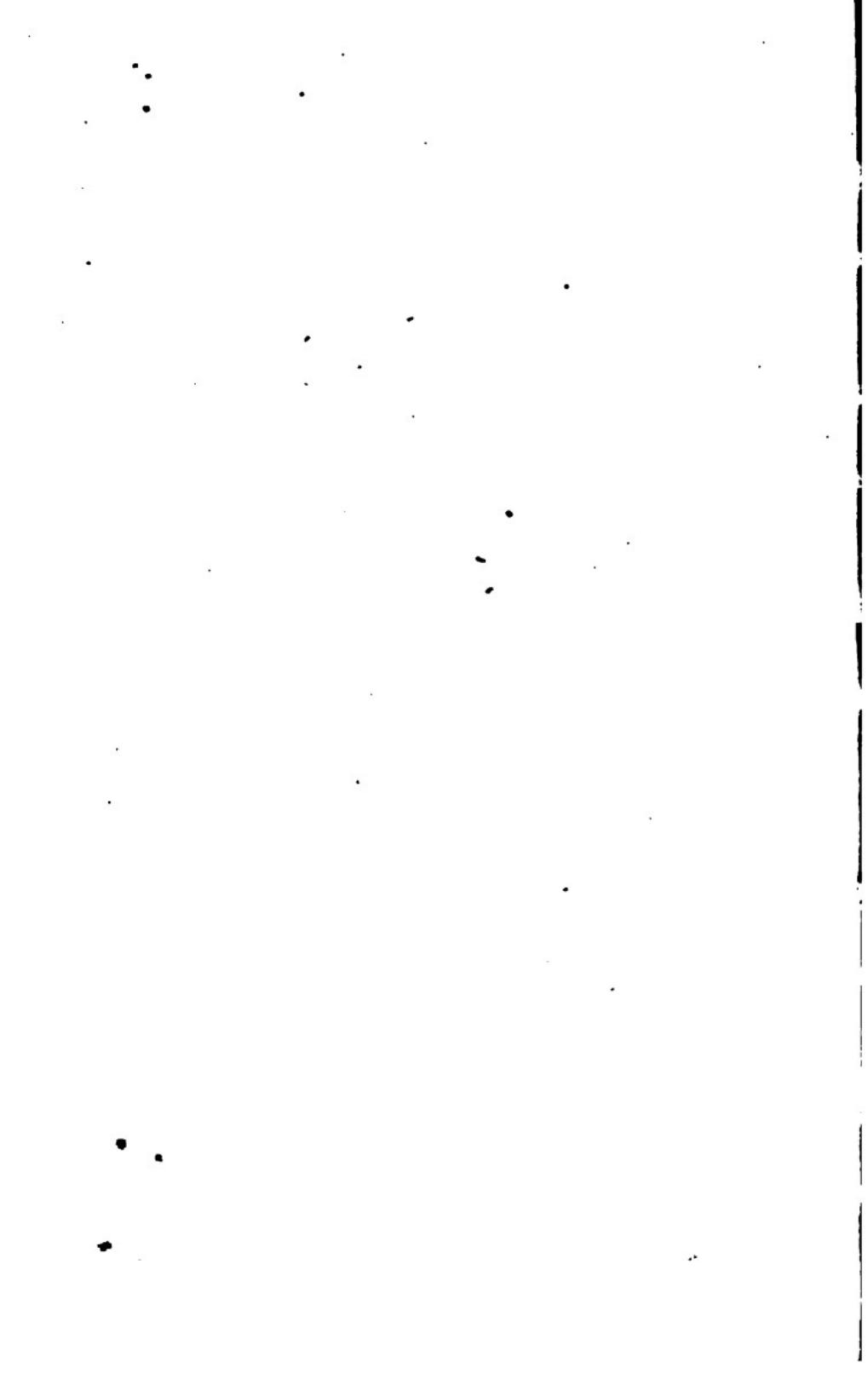


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LOVE AND THE WORLD,
AND OTHER POEMS.



LOVE AND THE WORLD, AND OTHER POEMS.

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BY
WILLIAM DAWE,

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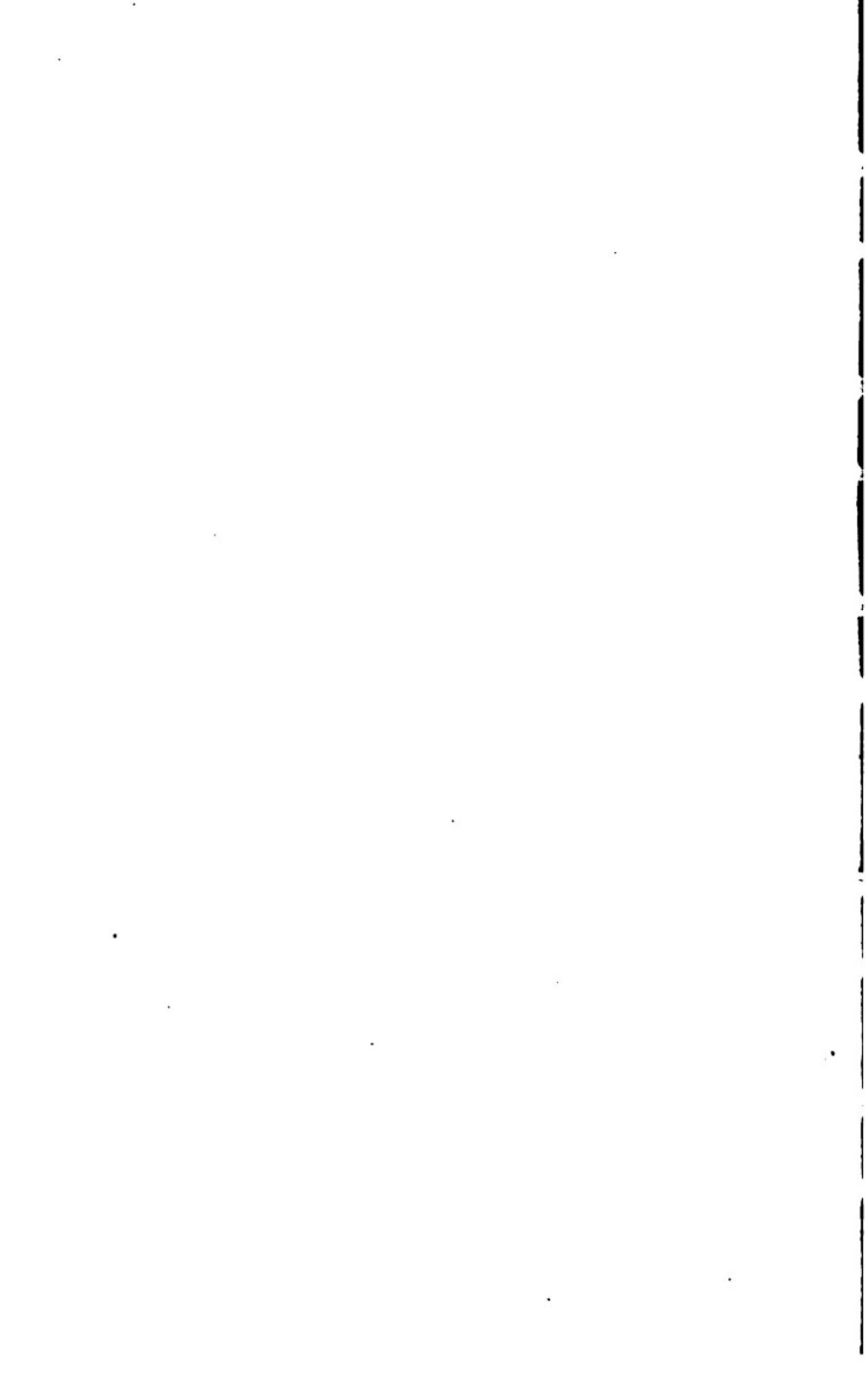
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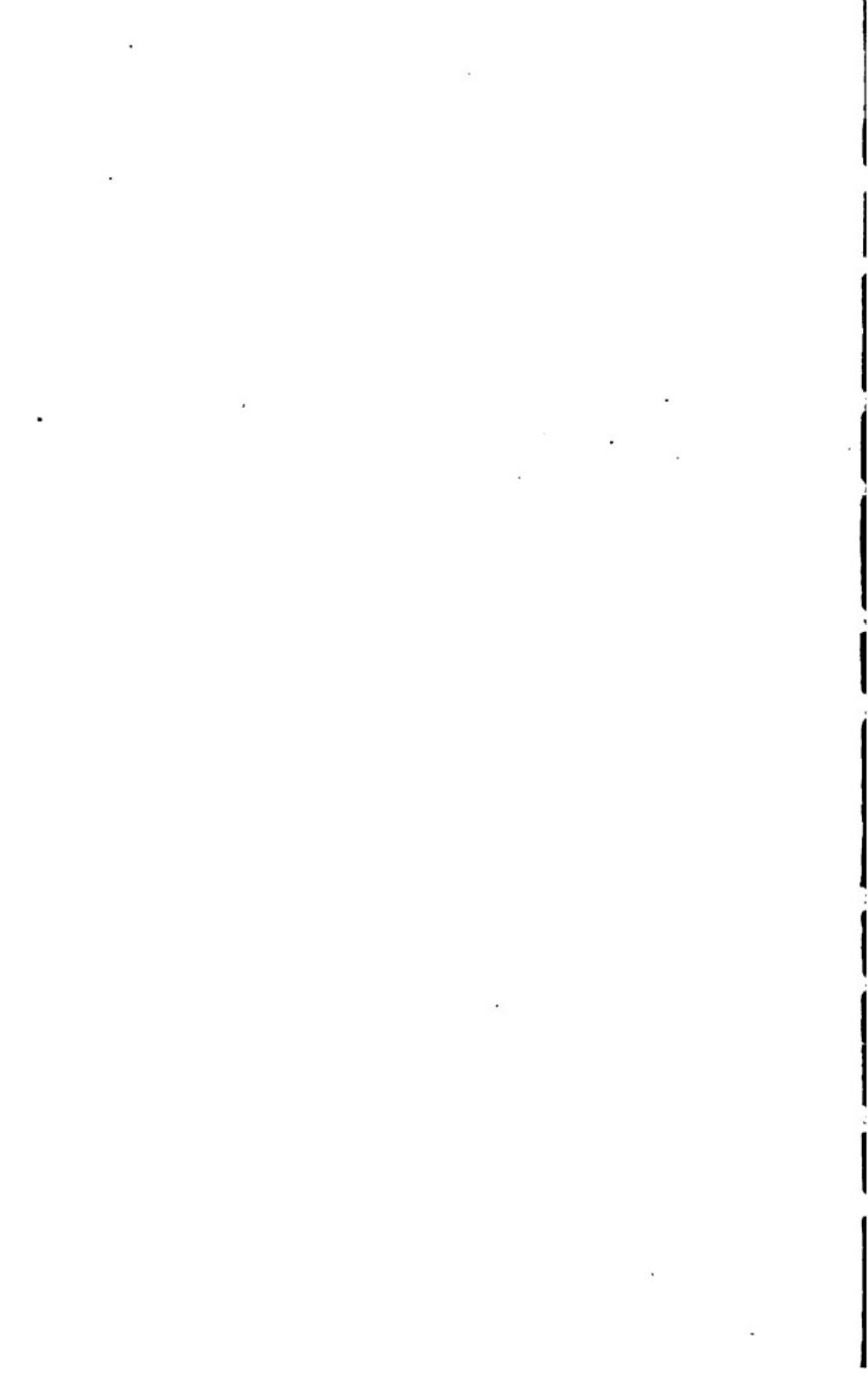
Sydonia, The Vestal, Actæon, Endymion, Ida, To Annie, Farewell, and a *Serenade* were published in London last year under the title of "Sydonia, and Other Poems." The others appear in print for the first time.

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
LOVE AND THE WORLD	I
IOLA	38
SYDONIA	75
THE VESTAL	150
HERO	158
ACTÆON	164
ENDYMION	169
IDA	171
TO ANNIE	178
DEATH	184
ODE TO MELANCHOLY	192
PLEASURE	197
TO A FAIR FRIEND	200
FAREWELL	202
SERENADE	205



LOVE AND THE WORLD.

"A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another."—JOHN XIII., 34.

SCENE FIRST.—*Night. IREL discovered declaiming.*

At his feet the sea is breaking; behind him rear gigantic mountains.

Irel. Can Earth be nothing—is Death nothing—
Life

Only the substance of a waking dream
That holds the fancy, and but serves to show
The littleness of heaven-created things?
Ye powers that sway from yon imperial throne!
Ye winds that rush forth at your God's command!
Ye stars that glisten like a virgin's tears
New shedded for the passion of sweet love,
What mean ye all? Thou God,
Who art the Lord Jehovah of all things!
Creator of great immortalities—
Master of Heaven, Hell, Earth—Thou great
First, Last, all-powerful, vast Omnipotent!
Thou who dost sway creation with a glance,
Make dust of empires, earthquakes of great worlds!

Who out of nothing formed this mighty mass—
 This troubled world of vexèd waters ! Thou
 Who giveth Life, and maketh Death, and Hell,
 And Heav'n for those who blindly wander here
 Wrapp'd in the darkest shrouds of misery—
 Thou who hast formed this world and all thereon !
 Thou who art heaven and love personified !
 Answer, oh answer, if Thou art that love,
 And let this troubled bosom rack no more
 Its very life with vain imaginings !
 Speak, Father, as thou didst in days of old,
 And guide this erring spirit. Ignorance,
 And Superstition, and such baser things
 Crowd in my troubled fancy ; and my thoughts
 Wander alone in vast, chaotic gloom.

(Pauses, and gazes earnestly into the sky.)

Ah, Heaven, the lives of some are strangely wrought,
 And those who cannot conquer must obey.
 I combat, not against Thee, but Thy world !
 Or is Thy world a part of Thee, oh God,
 And I, forlorn, have lifted up my voice
 Against Thy presence ? Pity, pardon me !

(Pauses, kneeling. Anon he rises strangely.)

Laugh on, mad world, and make you merry, for
 Your grave is yawning, and the victor Death—
 That grim, fierce, silent, horrible cold thing—
 Licks drop by drop the moisture of those lips,



Drinks thy heart's blood, and breathes his ghastly
breath

Into your nostrils, and you live on it,
And paler grow, and wither as you laugh.

Ha, ha ! laugh on, and I will laugh with thee !

And we will kiss Death's crumbling lips, and laugh—
Twine our arms round his neck, and laughing, die.

(He gazes distractedly around.)

Oh, had I died or knowledge never come,
How happy might I be ! Or love, ah, love !
Beautiful love, oh, where dost thou exist ?
Oh, where canst thou be found ? In heaven ? I seek
For this ethereal essence of the skies
Breathed in material forms—whence it becomes
No more ethereal ; for love, pure love
Ne'er dwelt upon this earth. Why ? Earth is earth,
And not a part of heaven : and God is love,
And therefore unlike man ; and man is made
In God's own image without godlike soul.
Such as the marble loveliness of love
Is reproduced a thousand times in clay
Of common, coarser nature. Could that love
But spread its influence o'er our mortal souls,
Earth might become a heaven. Oh God,
Hast Thou the power to fill each human heart
With a great love ? Hast Thou the power, oh God,
To change this vast corruption of weak souls,

And make this earth a paradise of love?
 Oh, what might all not be if but one spark
 Lit up each dreary soul? Or hast Thou, then,
 Decreed that love shall only be in heaven?
 What we call love is but a mockery;
 What we call honour is a breath of wind;
 What we call faith existeth but in words!
 And yet such is our nature, and we live.

Enter SPIRIT OF HEAVEN.

Spirit. Rash son of earth, you know not what you say!
 Wouldst thou command thy Lord? Wouldst thou undo
 The workings of His world, and let thy might
 Have equal pow'rs with His?

Irel. • Aye!

Spirit. Oh, forbear!
 Thy strange outcries the Lord of Hosts hath heard,
 Nor is He pleased with such!

Irel. Alas, nor I!
 But He no longer rules what He hath made.

Spirit. What mean you, mortal?

Irel. As I gaze upon
 This vast creation of thy God's, my God's,
 My heart grows sick with aching, and I sigh
 For those last moments which shall steal my breath,
 And wrap me in a deep and dark oblivion

Or loose me on a world of raptured light.
 Oh, I am weary of this wondrous world,
 Where ignorance forestalleth intellect ;
 Where all is a contaminated mass ; ..
 Where everything that meets the eye doth seem
 But an immense corruption and a sham !

Spirit. And wouldst thou search the secrets of the sky ?

Look in the face of heaven and read what's there ?
 Or syllable the words that angels sigh ?

Irel. Sweet soul, I seek not such ethereal things.
 Knowledge divine grows with the life of man !
 And in the trust of Him and all His works,
 A future opens such as thou dost live.

Spirit. If such, oh mortal, is thy great belief,
 What means this bitter outcry of thy soul ?

Irel. Spirit of Heav'n, devoted to thy God,
 Behold an erring, not a wicked soul.
 Oh, I believe me in my God, and hope,
 When the fierce trials of this world are past,
 That I shall rest with Him beyond those stars
 That light the dark vault of yon mystic space
 With such a dazzling glory ! Oh, fair soul,
 'Tis not of heaven, nor such bright forms as yours
 That I despair : but of this earth, my home !

Spirit. Smiles not the earth as fair as when He
 laid

A portion of fierce chaos in His hand
And called it into order ?

Irel. No, no, no !
Misery, Deceit, Corruption, and vile Death
Walk hand in hand, and fold in dear embrace
Luxurious vice and sottish roguery !
All cursèd ills that e'en hell vomits forth
Settle upon this earth, and prosper here.
Oh, tell me not, fair spirit, that the world
Contains an atom of divinity :
For I have lived upon it, moved, and seen,
And know its creeds, its selfish, horrid laws !

Spirit. Methinks, you wrong it much !

Irel. No, no, not I !
God wrongs the world, but He is God, and can
Destroy as He creates.

Spirit. He loves the world.

Irel. How can He love, and let it so survive ?

Spirit. He is all-wise, and what He does is
best.

Irel. And yet it seemeth strange that it should be
Better for us to live, as we do now,
Than in the joys of love and purity.
Hath He forgot us ?

Spirit. No, mortal, no !

Irel. And is He just ?

Spirit. Is He not heaven ?

Irel. And heaven is just, and He is heaven, and so
He is all justice, Spirit ?

Spirit. Mortal, yes !

Irel. And He is merciful, and agonies
That so beset our bodies and our souls
Here and hereafter show sweet mercy, love ?

Spirit. Keep thine own conscience clear.

Irel. Ah, yes ! As well
Might I yon gloomy cloud that shades yon moon
All to dissolve command.

Spirit. Then pain shall sting.

Irel. Aye, all the mighty world shall wring with pain !
Creation must speed on as it hath gone,
And bask in shadows of a horrid curse !

Spirit. The world was young—

Irel. Who taught it then ?

Spirit. God !

Irel. Then is not God the culprit ? At the bar
Of his own works condemned ?

Spirit. Forbear, forbear !

Audacious mortal ! Should a son of yours
Murder his brother, though you reared him well,
Must I blame you ? He sighs and sighs, and weeps
Over the wickedness of this your world,
But can do nothing yet. In heaven, as here,
There is a time for each and everything—
The Lord will judge your world.

Irel. Spirit, I ask not judgment 'gainst this world !
 I ask not for thy Lord's severest wrath ;
 Nor do I call for heaven's fierce punishment
 On my weak, erring home. No, Spirit, no !
 I would not have one jot of misery more
 Cause it fresh desolation. I would have,
 Instead of Terror, universal Love ;
 Instead of Envy, Hatred—brightest joy.
 It is the utter absence of this love !
 It is the fiendish hate of man for man—
 The universal idolising self
 That makes me so abhor it. I would build
 Another world, and shut all baser things
 Out from its portals. Mortals there should live
 As free from guile as heavenly seraphim,
 And sweet content should light each blissful soul
 With a divine effulgence ; I would make
 Man's life a path of sunshine :—he should love,
 Not curse it, as he doth.

Spirit. Nay, thou art wrong,
 And speakest harshly in excessive wrath :
 For love exists, and in abundance, too——

Irel. Where spirit, where ?

Spirit. Upon this earth of thine.

Irel. Sweet representative of the Most High—
 Fair spirit of that world I hope to reach !
 I know thou dost believe what thou hast said ;

But thou art of the skies, I of the earth !
 Thou look'st at all things with the pure, soft eyes
 Of an immortal loved one. But am I
 Not of this earth, formed of the common clay ?
 The very essence of the life thou seest
 Spread out before thee ?

Spirit. Mortal, mortal !

Irel. And well I know its depths, its mysteries—

Its utter selfishness, its cursèd creed—
 Hate, hate with all thy soul thy fellow-man !
 Haste, gentle Spirit, thou hast pow'r to quit
 Such misery as this : it is not meet
 That aught like thee should touch contamination.
 Would that I had thy might, no more should earth
 Bear me upon its whirling bosom ! No ;
 I'd mount yon brighter world where love exists,
 Or sink into oblivion.

Spirit. And thou wouldst have—

Irel. I would that heaven might alter its decree :
 That man might love and trust his fellow-man :
 That Envy, Hatred, Malice, which now fill
 The breast of every living human being,
 And make him nothing better than a beast,
 Should metamorphose to that glorious whole—
 Love, Honour, Trust.

Spirit. Mortal, thy wish is great.

Though you taste the dews of heaven,
Unanointed, unforgiven—
Though you float on beaut'ous rays
Which the golden sun displays ;
Though the soft winds like a sigh
Waft thee through yon azure sky ;
Though the glories of yon skies
Should unfold before thine eyes ;
Though yon mystic realms should seem
Like a pure and blissful dream ;
Though thy life appear to be
Part of yon eternity :
Know, you still breathe mortal breath—
Wisdom cannot conquer Death.

Son of mine, forbear, forbear !
Mount not yon ethereal air :
Thou shouldst aye be bound to me,
Such as I am bound to thee.
Seek not things of heavenly birth,
Well thou knowest, “Earth to earth !”
Mortal soul from sin unshriven,
Cannot, cannot enter heaven !
So thy mission through yon sky,
Is but a hollow mockery !
Learn the things that earth can teach,
Such are not beyond thy reach :

Breathe, oh mortal, mortal breath—
Wisdom cannot conquer Death.

Oh, forbear, presumptuous clod—
Leave the things of God to God !
Seek the wonders of thy sphere,
Learn the lore existing here !
Thou canst not, poor one, explore
Secrets of that mystic shore :
Great researches all are vain,
Deepest knowledge, deepest pain :
Thou art son of mine, and worth
But the value of thine earth :
Then breathe, mortal, mortal breath—
Wisdom cannot conquer Death.

Irel. Cease, cease, dear mother Earth, for I must go!

'Tis not the wisdom of the heavens I seek,
But knowledge of the world. I'll heed thee well !
And though I soar through God's eternal realms,
My thoughts, dear mother, shall revert to thee.

• (Exeunt.)

SCENE SECOND.—*Space.* IREL and SPIRIT OF
HEAVEN seated upon a cloud. Night.

Spirit. Oh mortal one, behold !

Ah, let me clutch thee, for my mortal brain

Dizzily whirls around. Oh, heaven, oh, God !
How wonderful is all ! And this is space ?
And those bright diamonds that surround us now,
Like jewels in a radiant diadem,
Are stars, heaven's beauteous stars ? this light
And airy gossamer on which we float
Through the soft sweetness of delicious air :—
This unsubstantial, lovely nothingness—
This fleecy rapture, call we not, a cloud ?

Spirit. Aye, even so.

Irel. How dazzling, beautiful !
And, Spirit, do we move ?

Spirit. We do, indeed.
Canst thou not feel a moving in the air ?

Irel. I feel a something gently fan my brow—
So gently, Spirit, that methinks it is
An angel breathing rapture through my brain.

Spirit. 'Tis but the silent zephyr of the night—
The perfumed loved one that steals through the
groves,
Of heaven, and kissing, wakes the cherubim.

Irel. This is not heaven ?

Spirit. No, mortal, no !
This is that wondrous and mysterious space
Ye call the sky.

Irel. Then where is earth ?

Spirit. Behold yon dreary circle at thy feet.

Irel. I dare not look, lest, feeling giddy, I
Should topple headlong.

Spirit. Nay, I'll support thee—
Gaze, gaze !

Irel. Spirit of Heaven, my brain
Throbs, throbs with awful wonder—oh, indeed,
Is yon grey, pygmy circle my huge world ?

Spirit. Yes, yes.

Irel. Methinks it indistinctly glows
Like some poor, dying light, that children oft
Blow with their little breaths to make a flame.

Spirit. What then did you expect ?

Irel. I have been taught
By the wise men of that abode called Earth,
That we were as these glorious planets here !

Spirit. And now thou seest——

Irel. That heaven is heaven,
And therefore, radiant one, unlike our earth.

Spirit. And so our mission ; it is time that we
Descend again.

Irel. Stay yet a moment !
Oh, let me breathe this perfumed breath awhile ;
Let me gaze longer into those fair stars !
Aye, Spirit, I am mortal, but I feel
My soul expanding ; something tells me here
Of immortality I am a part. Thou moon,
Thou glorious emblem of divinest love,

Shed, shed thy rays upon me, ere I go !
 And let thy sweet and mellow influence
 Soften the rugged path of earth's poor son.
 Farewell, sweet sky, for never, nevermore,
 Until He calls the dead from out their graves
 Can I be with you ; thou art His, and I
 Am His and Earth's ; what follows, we may be
 Bound one within the other, or a glimpse
 May be my portion, onward to my doom.

Spirit. Come, mortal, come, the night grows on
 apace !

Irel. Farewell, ye blissful tastes of heaven, fare-
 well !

I go again to earth, it is my lot,
 The destiny of a mortal ! I obey
 A higher mandate than mine own, farewell !
 Thy joy shall be a guide to me on earth,
 Thy bosom a fond home for me in heaven.

(*Exeunt.*)

SCENE THIRD.—*Space. SPIRIT OF HEAVEN and IREL floating over the sea. Night.*

Irel. How brightly gleams the silver moon upon
 This world of heaving waters !—and the stars
 Seem to have left their radiant homes above
 To kiss their own reflections—this is fair !

Spirit. And this is earth.

Irel.

Aye, earth, and yet not earth.

No man inhabits it : inviolate

Is it, as yon blue sky. O, he may claim
 That it is his, and that he rules its waves,
 Because they suffer him to boldly ride
 Over their snow-white crests : but once they rise,
 And the wild winds of heaven shoot o'er their deep,
 What hope is there for him ? O man, O man !
 Ever presumptuous and for ever vain,
 When will you own your weakness ?

Spirit.

Man

Should not succumb to elemental strife !
 It is his mission on this earth of thine
 To rule and conquer each and everything,
 That endeth its existence, great or small,
 Through earth's mortality. 'Tis only when
 He seeks to enter heaven and read what's there,
 Or tell of happiness or woe to come,
 With the authority of one on high,
 That he outsteps his bounds ! But look not so,
 For e'en in deepest mis'ry comes a gleam
 Of sunshine, and illumes the weary world.

SPIRITS OF THE SEA *sing.*

From the liquid depths of the azure sea,

Where the mermaid moans with a sweet emotion :

We come, a beacon, a light to thee,
To guide thee over the moonlit ocean.
Follow, follow, the day is spent,
And the fair, sweet moon, with its beaut'ous face,
Glows bright, and wherever its beams are lent
A halo of glory surrounds the place.

Merrily, merrily over the blue
We trip, and wherever our golden feet
Touch softly the ripples, a radiant hue
Illumines the face of the waters we beat.
The stars may gleam on the curling wave,
And light with effulgence our liquid home ;
And the beautiful beams of the moon may lave
In the rapture that languishes round our throne :
The world may glow, and the sun may shine,
And all may gleam with a radiant light :
But none of their glories shall outshine thine,
For, mortal, thou art a spirit to-night.

Softly the zephyrs through which we glide
Steal o'er our senses, and one by one,
On the perfumed breath of the balmy tide,
We float midst the rays of the moon and sun.
Or when the heavens with stars are bright,
And angels whisper around the moon ;
We, trembling, cease in our dazzling flight,
And hear of God in a raptured swoon.

Or when the wind, like an angel's sigh,
 Wafts thoughts angelic, and wakes a prayer,
 Our souls return to the realms that lie
 In the bosom of heaven, the great, the fair.
 Yet the world may glow, and the sun may shine,
 And all may gleam with a radiant light :
 But none of their glories shall outshine thine,
 For, mortal, thou art a spirit to-night.

Then follow, follow, the day is spent,
 And the fair, sweet moon, with its beaut'ous face,
 Glows bright, and wherever its beams are lent,
 A halo of glory surrounds the place.

Irel. Ah, me, the world's vast face seems changed
 All in a moment : this is love, such love
 As only spirits feel. Oh, could one spark
 Of their sublimity light wandering man,
 Earth yet might glow with beauty ! Men, men, men !
 What are ye in the presence of such souls ?
 What are ye placed beside divinity ?
 Poor nothings, weak, vain, forward, foolish things
 That cannot fathom your own ignorance.
 And I am one of ye—ah me, ah me !
 Yes, we will follow thee, bright souls, lead on !
 Methinks I see a streak of pearly grey
 Already opening in the eastern sky,

The solemn harbinger of glorious light—
 The paly shadow of a blazing world :
 E'en something's written here ! On, on,
 Beautiful spirits, guardian deities—
 Your song rings in my brain, as though the heavens
 Had poured their maddening music in my ears,
 Till now, I trembling think I have become
 One of your glorious selves ! Adieu, adieu !
 Celestial choir of radiant saints, ye love !
 And love would make a heaven of deepest hell.

(*Exeunt.*)

SCENE FOURTH.—IREL *and* SPIRIT OF HEAVEN
flying through the air. Day.

Irel. Where go we now ?

Spirit. On, on to find this love.

(*They fly steadily on, lost in thought.*)

Irel. Canst thou divulge the secrets of thy home ?

Spirit. What wouldest thou know ?

Irel. If after death

We so transformèd are, that all that is
 So deeply selfish, cunning, in our natures
 Is left behind, and essence but remains ?

Spirit. Aye, even so.

Irel. I comprehend not yet !

All essence must be good : whate'er may be

Base in our natures endeth with our flesh.
 And yet our soul is not our essence, for
 The soul is often bad : yet there must be
 An essence to that soul, and it is good.
 Therefore, all damned souls must have an essence
 And yet that essence suffers—is it just ?

Spirit. It is the will of heaven !

Irel. Ah, me !

(*They float onward in silence.*)

Irel. What sounds are these that so besiege
 mine ears?

Spirit. The noise of pond'rous guns : a conflict
 there

Rages as fierce as hell.

Irel. More human love.

Spirit. As one killed, so shall many.

Irel. These are Cains ?

Spirit. They are their actions.

Irel. Shall they answer for
 Those actions, as he did ?

Spirit. That I may not divulge.

Irel. Is this not murder then ?

Spirit. Aye, surely.

Irel. And yet we think not so.

Spirit. And ye are wise ?

Irel. Aye, we are reckon'd so.

Spirit. And God gave ye your wisdom, that this world

Might benefit by it accordingly.

Irel. Yet are such scenes a benefit or not ?
Or are they but a curse ? 'Tis true, the earth
Yields richer products when manured with blood ;
And some receive the mighty world's applause ;
Whilst others hide their poor diminished heads,
And thousands, slaughtered, lie on bloody sward.
Each of these things may have a virtue, yet
That virtue's gained at such a sacrifice
That it becomes a horror. I abhor
Great laurels won through the debasement of
Humanity ! But how the sulph'rous smoke
Ascends ! I choke ; quick, let us hasten on !
So ye are brothers ! " Love ye one another."
Oh, who among you in the rounds of life
Follows that sweet command ? Not one, not one.
'Tis only when the dews of death steal o'er
The chilly forehead that the hardened soul
Quivers within its cage. Poor erring ones,
The glory of this life seems more to ye
Than an eternity of heaven. Ha, ha !
What know we of that heaven thou speakest of ?
What knowest thou ? Hast seen it ? ha, ha, ha
We die, and know not what becomes of us—
We care as little ; we have lived, do live !

That will be consolation e'en in hell.
 Plague us no more with moralising, we
 Believe what most believe: there is a God,
 A God of love and mercy ; being so,
 He cannot punish with eternal fire
 Things He has made, and loved. Dream on, dream
 on !

Rude and terrific will thy wakening be—
 Or may He prove as thou dost fondly hope !

SPIRITS OF MASSACRE *sing.*

We are the spirits of Massacre,
 The plagues of hell inditing :
 We ride on the sulph'rous bosom bare
 Of the gleams of forkèd lightning.
 Where'er we glance a blaze of wrath
 Falls, brightest hopes consuming :
 And death-lights dance along our path,
 Our horrid deeds illumining.

Over this murderous field we fly,
 And the sickening sights of death adore : .
 And steal the light from the failing eye,
 And howl and dance at the cannon's roar.
 And glut the brains of the shatter'd dead,
 And scream delighted o'er our food :
 For of all sweet things before us spread,
 There is nought to us like the feast of blood.

Into each human heart we steal,
 And be it good or bad, at times
 Our direful presence it shall feel,
 And show our power in woful signs.
 And in the maiden's aching breast
 We glide, and once we are within,
 She sighs, and sighs in her unrest,
 And thinks, and thought begets a sin.

Ah, yes, the pleasant task is ours
 To view the ebbing of life's breath :
 To laugh at consecrated showers
 Of tears, and never fear your death !
 Your misery is our great bliss,
 Your bliss our only misery :
 For we are His, and ye are His,
 And mortal life is agony !

Irel. Methinks the thundering cannons cease awhile,

Let us descend, for I would gaze upon
 The horrors of this huge and bloody deed.

Spirit. 'Twill hamper our research.

Irel. I'd have thee see—
 E'en though thou findest me a soul that loves,
 (Of which I now despair), that for that soul,
 I'll point thee out ten million ones that hate.
 The natural state of man is not respect,

Nor love, nor honour ; these are forced on him
 Through circumstances named society.
 He must obey the laws of this and that,
 Else will he outward suffer ; conscience, ah,
 What is that conscience of which mortals speak ?
 The agony of an upbraiding mind ?
 The mind upbraids not if the heart stands firm !
 'Tis only when the fear of consequences
 Shoots shades o'er trembling souls, that conscience
 pricks.

Spirit. Thou art severe.

Irel. Am I not just ?

(*Exeunt.*)

SCENE FIFTH.—*The battlefield. IREL and SPIRIT OF HEAVEN moving among the wounded and dead.*

Irel. Ah, me, what horrid sights ! oh, Spirit, Spirit,
 How can thy God look down upon such things ?
 These all are brothers, brothers, brothers !
 Could aught in hell be fearfuller than this ?
 I wonder, Spirit, if the damnèd souls
 Of those in torture hate each other so ?

Spirit. I know not ! but this is a fearful sight !
 I almost sicken as I gaze upon
 The misery heaped around. And art thou right,
 And can this love exist but in the skies ?
 I tremble, yet I know not why I tremble ;

Or can it be a sign from heaven, from God,
To tell me thou art right, that man is doomed ?

(They move away. Presently they stand unseen over
a dying soldier.)

Soldier. Water, for Jesu's sake, a drop of water !
Oh, one small drop or else I die, I die.

Spirit. Fill yonder can from out yon pool of blood.
(Irel fills it. Spirit breathes into it.)

Now give it him to drink.

Irel. "Tis water !

Spirit. "Tis water now, it blood shall be again !

(He hands it to soldier, who is about to drink when
another wounded soldier rises up and takes it
from him.)

First Soldier. One drop ! one drop ! oh, give it
me, I die !

Second Soldier. Nay, if you die, you die :—twill
save my life.

As well might I pour it upon the sand
As into thee, 'twould be as fruitful quite.

First Soldier. Canst thou not see a drop will save
my life ?

Second Soldier. But for a moment, should I give it
thee,

Why I should die as soon as thou, poor fool.

First Soldier. For mercy's sake, one little drop,
one drop !

Oh, for one second give my parchèd throat
Relief, and heaven will bless thee.

Second Soldier. "Tis all gone.

First Soldier. Then may the curses of humanity
All fall upon thy head : may thy black heart
Swell, swell with grief until it bursts, and then
May't swell and burst again ! God's curses on thee !
May thou no more feel one small sigh of hope—
May hell refuse thee shelter at the last !

(*He falls back dead.*)

Second Soldier. And curses on thy soul, where'er
it be !

God's curses on thee, madman, dost thou hear ?
May all the foulest spirits in deep hell
Torture thy cursèd soul ! I see thee now
Toss'd in a blazing whirlpool—ha, ha, ha !

(*He falls back dead.*)

Irel. Humanity was never born in man.
Behold these wretches on the brink of death,
Vile, selfish, horrible : behold them now—
Their souls have fled, yet there's no difference !
They are now what they were—beasts, beasts, beasts !
But let us on again : methinks our march
In search of love is fruitless. I had hoped
Among the millions to have found it, but
That hope is now no more. Unto the world
Things we have seen might pass for this same love ;

But we can steal into their inmost hearts
 And we have found them vacant of sweet love,
 Yet full of selfishness ! Is it not so ?

Spirit. It is indeed.

Irel. What think you of it ?

Spirit.

I

Had hoped that more divinity existed
 Upon this earth :—but we lose time, on, on !

(*Exeunt.*)

SCENE SIXTH. *A valley. IREL AND SPIRIT OF HEAVEN moodily moving along.*

Spirit. Come forth ye bright attendants of the air,
 And charm away this mortal's melancholy
 With thy enraptured notes : nor sing of love,
 He knows nought of the skies.

SPIRITS *Sing.*

From over the rugged rocks and peaks,
 A band of warblers we advance :
 From where the sweet moon timidly peeps
 On the world below : and her tremulous glance
 The sons of mortals and gods entrance.
 We come, a legion of spirits bright,
 From a world of sun, a world of light :
 From our home where the eagles vain men defy,
 From our crownèd steeps in the bright blue sky :

From our high abode where the seraph pinions
A moment repose in the rosy day :
And brush the dew from their wings away,
And warble amid the sun's dominions.

First Spirit. The moonbeams gleam in the dark
ravine,
And the night-wind moans as it softly floats
O'er the shadowed deep, where the fairies sleep,
And the airy sprite of the weird gloom gloats.
And when through the air there is borne the fair
And delicate shadows of sun, which lave
The far-off blue with a roseate hue,
Worlds rise on worlds from the liquid wave.

Second Spirit. Mortal, mortal, we of air
Tell thee not to so despair :
Seek, oh seek yon bliss so vaunted,
Thou shalt find what thou hast wanted !
Though the time be short or long,
Or thou mortals move among
In the guise of man or spirit,
Thou shalt see it and be near it.

Third Spirit. Banish then, oh mortal one,
Sighs and achings of the breast :
Thou shalt find a glorious rest
In the kingdoms of the sun.

First Spirit. Mortal, thou anon shalt move
In the joys of deepest love :

All the universe shall be
Like a golden world to thee :
All that thou hast seen shall seem
Like an agitated dream :
All awaits thee yet on high—
Dying, thou shalt never die.

Fourth Spirit. Could the earth unfold its store
Of wonders never seen before :
Could the whole of human love
Gleam like planets from above :
It would never seem to thee
Like yon great eternity.

First Spirit. Human passion is a word
By the wandering zephyr heard :
Human passion soon as spoke
Is by wandering zephyr broke :
Human passion simply crossed,
Is by wandering zephyr lost :
Human vows, however fair,
Turn to nothing in the air.

Second Spirit. Therefore, let thy fancy fly
Higher than the earth ; and high
As the planets and their moon,
Circling in yon purple tomb.
Yet thou must not all despise
Grovelling worms before thine eyes :
Nor because they lead the way,

Need you do the same as they !
 Follow thine own instinct bright,
 It will teach thee what is right :
 Better actions emulate—
 God is greatest of the great.

Chorus of Spirits. Banish, then, oh mortal one,
 Sighs and achings of the breast :
 Thou shalt find a glorious rest,
 In the kingdoms of the sun.

Irel. Ah, blest am I indeed. Fair spirits all
 Accept a mortal's thanks. From off this heart
 Hast thou, beloved ones, raised despondency
 That almost overwhelm'd me. If this love
 Does not exist on earth, there is a heaven,
 And it existeth there —.

(*They walk slowly along the valley.*)

Behold the leaflets cling to one another,
 And grasses, intertwined with grasses, wave
 Beneath the gentle breeze. Inanimate
 Do these things seem, and yet they nearer are
 To heaven than man. The beasts in pasture,
 And feathered wanderers of the azure air,
 Are more harmonious when in herds and flocks
 Than singly ; yet this man, this god !
 Lives but within himself, alone, alone,
 And growls within himself like some fierce brute

In dismal cavern o'er a ghastly feast.
And why should he be so ? Before the world
Was cursed so much with wealth did such exist ?
And what say you ? thou knowest thou art all
That this created and God-glorious world
Battles so fiercely for. Beautiful demon !
Thou more to some poor hearts than even heaven,
What make you of this life ? Dost thou not laugh
At the excessive follies thou committest
As I do now ? Is it not pleasant, then,
To watch the fierce destruction that o'erwhelms
The mortal, as he clutches thy fair face ?
And prints kiss after kiss upon that face ?
He thinks that thou, and thou alone art bliss !
And you laugh on and cheat his foolish thoughts,
And tempt him, and embrace him, and unfold
Before his dazzled and enraptured eyes
The million pleasures that are spread around.
Thou art as delicately false as she
Who said she loved—twin sister of the moon !
Fair as a radiant angel, but so false
That the soul rises up against thee as
It does at some dread horror. And yet thou
Art pleasant, aye, as pleasant as sweet sins :
And needed for the workings of this world ;
For thou art breath and life, and all that makes
The world roll on, and people worship God.

Spirit. Med'um of good and ill, of life and death.

Irel. Here let us rest upon this grassy bed ;
 My limbs are wearied and the sun glows warm.
 It is a beauteous spot, and did this love
 Exist on earth, 'tis in such bower as this
 Its pure and holy vows should swelling rise
 Like Gospel from a temple ; let us rest.

(*They seat themselves.*)

I've often thought if love of two young souls
 Is without sensual feeling : can there be
 A person who forgets the senses, and
 Thinks of his lover as he would his God ?

Spirit. Here come two lovers, listen, thou shalt
 hear,
 For they will answer thee.

Enter a YOUTH and a MAIDEN.

Youth. Aye, this will do !
 I grow awearied 'neath the heated sun,
 And fain would rest : come sit thee here, my love,
 And we will tell each other of our hearts
 And what they whisper to us ; and our eyes
 Shall look into each other's, and read there
 Our hearts' desires :—Come sweet, thou lovest me ?

Maiden. Love thee, thou essence of my universe,
 The daylight of my soul ? I see thy face

In every beam that gilds yon solar world ;
 I hear thy voice in every gentle wind,
 I feel thy form in every dream I dream :—
 Waking or sleeping thou art ever near.

(They sit.)

Irel. Can we have found this love ?

Spirit. I know not—wait !

Youth. And dost thou love me so ?

Maiden. Indeed I do ;

Dearer than tongue can say or words express.

Oh, had I cause to show it, then, my love,

Thou'dst know its depth.

Youth. And what wouldest do for me ?

Maiden. Oh, I would do—but how can poor
words speak

A feeling such as mine ?

Youth. No, words cannot.

Maiden. But actions shall, when deeds for action
call.

Youth. Dear one, I call thee now—

Maiden. What dost thou mean ?

Youth. I love thee to distraction.

Maiden. And I thee !

Youth. Aye, but thou hast the power to make me
happy !

Sweet, sweet, I die of love—dost comprehend ?

Maiden. I did not, but I do! great God, great God!

So this, then, is thy love?

Youth. Such love as thou,
Or any woman should be pleased to share.
Oh, my adored one—

Maiden. Oh, away, away!
Go hide thee, lest the earth whereon thou tread'st,
Hurl itself up against thee! Shame, sir, shame,
To trifle with a heart that trusted so!
So thou wouldest steal that virtue which now makes
Me equal to a queen : and it was love!
Oh, horrid blasphemy—forgive him, heaven.
I loved thee, but farewell! no man shall love
Steal with luxurious motion through my soul;
Now all is ended, and we part, must part.

Youth. Farewell, thou ne'er didst love me: I'll
begone;

With love ne'er dwelt such scruples—fare thee well!

(*Exit. She weeps.*)

Irel. (*Speaking at her.*) Nay, maiden, dry thine
orbs, and thank thy God.
That thou'st escaped so horrible a sin.
Yon youth is but a devil in disguise:
But thou hast conquered, angel as thou art.

Maiden. (*To herself.*) Oh, I have lost him—

Irel. But hast saved thyself!

Maiden. The richest youth in all the country round.

Irel. Ah, God, what's that ?

Maiden. My scruples, ha, ha, ha !

A cunning cloak, affected modesty.

But he will love me better for that cloak,

And I may gain what now I seem to lose.

(*Exit.*)

Irel. Enough, enough, enough ! Spirit, adieu !
 And should we meet again, in heaven, perhaps
 All may be diff'rent. Love does not exist !
 Love that is pure and unadulterated,
 Scarce yet had being in a mortal breast.
 Let us renounce our search, and go our ways :
 You to your sparkling home of glory, I
 To wander here alone. Once more, adieu !
 And if in yon blessed realms thou darest lisp
 A mortal name, Spirit, remember me.

(Spirits *in the air.*)

First Spirit. Let not depression flood the whole
 Of thy exalted spirit's might :
 Nor rob it of its glory bright,
 Nor dim the lustre of that soul.

Second Spirit. Yon sun that rose
 A blush of love :
 Did beams disclose

Of heaven above :
But darkness came,
And bitter night
Shrouded its flame
Subdued its light!
Yet still with majesty it gleams,
And the whole universe doth revel in its beams.

Third Spirit. Mortal, upon this earth some form
To still that soul will surely rise :
Created as ye are 'midst storm,
Ye must have glimpses of the skies.

Chorus of Spirits. Banish then, oh mortal one,
Sighs and aches of the breast :
Thou shalt find a glorious rest
In the kingdoms of the sun.

(*SPIRIT OF HEAVEN vanishes, and IREL moves thoughtfully away, as Spirits finish singing.*)

IOLA.

Canto the First.

WHY mourns sweet Iola, the fair ?
The sun is bright, the sky is clear,
And in the perfumed atmosphere
The soft clouds hang on dreamy air.
The earth is like a golden world
Set in a soft, angelic blue,
For azure sweets appear to view :
As though the seraphs had unfurl'd
Their lids ; and their immortal eyes
Added yon blueness to the skies.
Far off the tinkling of a bell
And the full voice of muleteer
Are heard ; and with more pond'rous swell
The curfew's slow, sonorous knell
Falls on the anxious ear.

And she has seen the day depart,
With heavy lids and aching heart ;
And though the softer shades of night
Luxurious steal, and hide from sight
All coarser things that glaring day
Illumines with its wondrous ray ;

Thought will not let her tortured mind
One little blissful moment find.

Why leans she on that window sill ?
Why sits she at that window still ?
The sun is sunk, and in the sky
The planets with each other vie ;
And through the soft ethereal gloom
Upon them smiles the mystic moon ;
And all the world in great delight
Reflected is in heaven to-night.
From o'er the meadows, on her brow,
Sweet steals the soft and fragrant wind :
Its very softness seems unkind—
It has no right to woo her now !
What though her life had never been
What fair maid's life should ever be !
She once had fancied liberty,
And could of sweetest glories dream !
But now, oh, horrid, horrid thought !
Poor mind, why not forget the Now,
Since from thee it, alas, was bought ?
I see the price upon thy brow.
Is there no form, no thought, no thing
That can thy troubled soul appease ?
Is there no balm that soul to ease ?
Ah, doth the earth contain such sting ?

And who is she thus seated there
Gazing into the starlit air ?
And who is she with moisten'd eye
That gazeth thus into the sky ?
As though her very heart had broke—
As though the stars unto her spoke.
Iola—fair as fairest day—
Of famous Andalusia :
Whose wondrous eyes of flashing black
Followed, unflinching, Sol's fierce track,
And could the lights of heaven defy,
When eagles faltered with closed eye.
She, whose great beauty was akin
To that of heavenly cherubim :
She, whose soft flesh like ivory
Shone, but more beautiful to see :
Whose mouth resembles fairest rose
Unfolding, as the sweet wind blows :
A creature of the earth, but fair,
It might have been an angel there.

But as she sits to-night alone,
With many a sigh, and many a moan
The lustre deadens in that eye,
Except when in those eyes appear
The lustre of a deadly tear—
The language of an anguished sigh.

There is a sadness in those eyes,
A far-off longing look, which fain
Would struggle with great powers, in vain—
Like waning planets in the skies.

There was an hour when heart was glad,
And Time, drear Time unheeded flew
Joyously on the winds that blew—

Creation was not always sad.

That eye is dull, that heart is dead,
And mis'ry on that face is read ;
Changed all, and withered all beside,
Since she became Arminza's bride.

Reared in that province where the day
In glory languishes away :
Where skies are clear, and maidens' eyes
Steal lustre from divinest skies ;
Such as the stars, that worlds illume,
Pilfer their glory from the moon.
Beneath a father harsh she grew,
Nor love of parent ever knew !
It was not hers, a daughter's part,
To press unto a mother's heart,
And make a confidante of one
Given by heaven, and heaven alone.
Her sire o'er gains and moneys laugh'd—
E'en fancied gleaming raptures quaff'd;

"Fright not the warblers with thy cries ;
Thou hast no cause for fear ; command,
The head of twenty chiefs I stand !"
And to his lips a pipe, and blew,
And twenty chieftains stand to view.
Then he advanced and stood before
The rest, and smiled. He seemed a Moor
In face and dress, and those who stood
Around, had sprung of Afric's blood.
They were indeed a swarthy band :
Meeter for Egypt's barren land,
Or any part of Afric's clime,
Than Andalusia divine.

Meanwhile with staring orbs surprised,
And admiration undisguised,
The motley group survey'd the maid,
And signs of joy evinced, betray'd !
There was a sway, all rule to break,
The maid to seize and bliss partake.
But he, the leader of the band,
Spoke forth in tones of stern command—
"The man who harms the girl shall die!"
And gleamed a pistol in his hand,
And shone a fury in his eye.
A murmured sound and all was o'er,
And back they move unto the door :

Their leader's nature well they know—
No truer friend, no fiercer foe.

“Lead me unto the master, child!”
Thus spoke the man of aspect wild,
With soft insinuating tone,
One had not thought such soul could own.
And then she lifted up her eyes
(Oh, orbs that can create sweet sighs)!
And saw the man who thus had spoke—
The tangled beard, the bronzèd throat:
The wild, defiant look in eye:
The silken sash above the thigh
That gleam'd with pistols bright, and then
She could not, could not look again.
“Oh, maiden, of the beauteous eye,
Timid as that of the gazelle,
And limpid as sweet streams that well
From pleasant mounts that breast the sky,
Fear not—believe me when I say
That I command and all obey.”

He held his hand, she took it, they
Proceeded forth upon their way!
She knew not why she took that hand—
His gesture was not of command;

And yet his eyes' mysterious light,
Gleaming and fierce, and strangely bright,
A horrid radiance seem to make,
Like that of angry poison snake.
His dusky features bore a smile
Of fancied pleasantry the while ;
But round his lips such smiles appear
A subtle and repulsive sneer.
And yet she knew not what she thought,
Nor dreaded him, nor fearèd aught.
She only knew his hard hand lay
Upon her own, like night on day ;
She only knew those strange, bright eyes
Were gazing on her with surprise !
She knew that now, and now again
He pressed her hand, she felt no pain :
She wondered why she did not die,
And yet she only heaved a sigh.
It seemed as though a spell were thrown,
Nor could she call her soul her own !
She led him on o'er path and bed,
She felt him crush the daisy's head :
She led him up the well-worn way
Where she, as child, did daily play :
They mount the weedy steps, and soon
Stand in the miser's dusty room.

He sat at table, in a chair
Which of all furniture was bare :
Ill-dressed he seemed ; his haggard face
Of harshness only bore a trace ;
And avarice and cunning wrought
Features despisèd and unsought.
And yet he bore a noble name—
One of the proudest in proud Spain.
Self-banished from the realms of men,
Hating the world which hates again,
Alone he lived, nor human voice
E'er fell upon his ear from choice.
He seemed a man who took delight
In things as secret as the night ;
A man whose sense ne'er rose above
The height of unimpassioned love.
His tortured wife, with ghastly smiles,
Glares on him through his golden piles :
Gold, gold his only bliss can be,
Gold is his only misery.

His wife, he cried, nor blushed with shame !
She only was his wife in name :
No marriage laws, no priest, no prayer !
She once was beautiful and fair,
But beauty fled—she left a child,
He thought it like its mother smil'd !

He hated it ; it brought to him
A recollection he would dim :
He kept the infant from his sight—
Ah me, it was so very like !

He started to his feet with bound,
When he these strange intruders found
Before his eyes, and angry word
Unheeded flew, unheeded heard.
The Moor advanced, and thus began
Unto the agitated man :—
“ Dost know me ? If not, I will tell
My name ; ’twill sound a cursèd knell,
Methinks, unto thy anxious ear.
But rest thee, Don, thou needst not fear—
Arminza !”—“ Ah, that cursèd name,
Return thee back from whence thou came !
What want you here ? Your plan unfold—
I cannot give, I have not, gold !
But take thy fill, whate’er it be,
It matters not to me, to me !
Bold Moor, why thus with armèd men ?
What seek you in so poor a den ?”
“ I came to seek thy gold, dost hear ?
Nay swear not ; well I know ’tis here !
But list thee, I have found a prize
More sweet than gold unto mine eyes !

Dost gaze in wonder? yet 'tis true—
 That gift, poor wretch, I ask of you!"
 "Not gold, you say?"—"Not gold, I say!"
 The miser turned his eyes away,
 And rubbed his long, lean hands with glee—
 "Then name it, and whate'er it be
 It shall be thine, have I the power!"
 The chieftain smiled—"Within this hour
 I met this lady; she to me
 Is more than gold can ever be."

The miser show'd o'erjoy'd surprise,
 And shone and sparkled his dead eyes;
 "Then take her, she is thine," he cried,
 "And let a soul in peace abide!"
 The maiden heard, nor could she speak,
 But a low agonising shriek
 Broke on the air: the hardy band
 Looked strangely in each others' eyes,
 And trembled fierce each hardened hand,
 And each the softening sense defies.
 She lieth in Arminza's arms
 A virgin flower with all her charms.
 And must those sweets untouch'd, untasted,
 Upon yon Moorish chief be wasted?
 Oh, let the bosom of the earth
 Hide heaven, and everything of worth.

Let yon bright gleams of sun and moon
 The centre of the earth illume !
 The beauteous earth sink 'neath the sea,
 And all the world a chaos be !

They bore her forth in troubled swoon,
 They bore her forth unto her doom !
 Aye, far away o'er hill and plain,
 Through verdurous pasture-lands of Spain.
 They led her on, she knew not where ;
 Alas, she had forgot to care.
 An antique castle rose to view—
 He said that she should rule it, too !
 She smiled, her lips the smile deny ;
 She laughed, it ended like a sigh.

Canto the Second.

Ah, there is something in the ties
 Of home, no matter where it be :
 Our mem'ry, like a swift bird, flies
 O'er azure seas, through sunny skies,
 Dear country, back to thee !
 The child of desert loves the sand,
 Where sun and wind alone command :
 Though drear and barren to our eyes,
 To him, an earthly paradise.



Why sits sweet Iola, the fair,
By yonder window in despair,
When all creation gleams around
In fulness of a bliss profound ?
So beautiful and fair to view—
What doth she weeping here alone ?
For what sin doth that heart atone ?
Could that sweet heart a sin have known ?
Could such a being prove untrue ?
And yet she sighs, but why that sigh ?
That earnest, anxious gaze in sky,
As though the soul had taken flight
Into the bosom of the night ?

Aye, she is now the joy, the pride
Of the fierce Moor—Arminza's bride !
Wedded to one who loves her more
Than Christian maid was loved before ;
She answers his caress with sigh,
Avoids his form with downcast eye ;
Nor dare she one harsh furrow trace
Upon his fierce and bronzed face.
A silent grief racks fierce her breast,
And dims the lustre of her eyes :
Earth cannot render her that rest
For which her aching bosom sighs.

She loves not, yet is she beloved,
The Moor's affection hath she proved ;
But that affection in her arms
Blight all, and withers all her charms.
Those bloodshot eyes, so staring, wild,
From which no pleasant sparkle smil'd ;
Those tangled locks, that dusky face,
Were never meant for sweet embrace,
Or for divinest love, or things
Dear, soft as sweet imaginings.
Oh, could she lay upon her breast
That head, and let it sweetly rest
On softest blisses, pure and fair,
Nor shudder at the reptile there ?
No, no, a thousand times, no, no !
She cries, and all the world cries so !
It is not meet the wolf should lie
Beneath a silken canopy :
The tiger wild must have its lair,
The eagle mount the stormy air :
The lion bound the forest deep,
Nor seek to nestle with the sheep.

But hark, the steady tramp of men
And horses, come along the glen.
He has returned, her chief, her lord,
Her master, by his slave abhor'd.

From plundering expedition he
Returns with spoils triumphantly :
And shouts, and oaths, and laughter loud
Proclaim the coming of the crowd.
She listens, and her moisten'd eye
With anguish, searches deep the sky :
Her aching heart forgets to beat,
But even fancy plays the cheat.
The gate unswings with heavy groans,
And on the courtyard's well-worn stones
The clang of hoofs and chains resound,
And fill the air with curious sound.
She hears that voice, unto the band,
Speaking in tones of stern command :
And all her breast a horror fills—
A pain that never, never kills.

And doth she seek her silken nest,
And bear the love her soul abhors ?
As though that love she loves, adores—
As though that love alone were rest ?
How sweet for some this world appears,
For others, ah, how full of tears !
Delightful joy forever flies
Before the favoured mortal's eyes :
And earthly blisses to him given
Seem a delicious part of heaven.

But o'er yon life a dreary cloud,
Grim sorrow, like sepulchral shroud
Hangs fretful ; and the darkened sky
Breathes hope with a despairing sigh.
No ray of light, no gleam serene
Illumines sweet his mournful scene :
The world for him is all unkind,
Harsh and inhuman is mankind.
He sees no sights a bliss to prove,
He knows no friend, he loves no love !
All is a huge confused mass
Of hollow shows, that pass and pass !
Love seems a jest, a thing to say
In excuse of a serious play :
And thoughtlessness with airy mien
Reigns all omnipotent, supreme.

The sun is up, the day is come,
And lights again the Moorish home ;
Already in the yard below
Steps quickly hurry to and fro ;
And voices, loud in anger, call
From the high battlemented wall !
And clanking chains : and now a shriek
Of pain, which lash forbade to speak
In language rude, in any tone
Except in cry, or hollow moan.

And then the song of joyous bird
Far off upon the wind is heard ;
And then the mighty world is still,
As though it never breathed an ill.
How strange that Love, Despair, and Death
Should dwell upon a single breath !
That each a world within its own
Should have, yet live in one alone !

Her lord appears before her now,
With majesty upon his brow :
Pleased with his labours in the field,
Pleased with his labours of delight :
For mighty trophies deck his shield,
Hard won by him in bloody fight.
His spoils, aye, he would have her see,
The glories of his victory.
“ Yes, I will view thy spoils,” she said ;—
“ They are *thy* spoils.” She bows her head,—
Nor can the beaming features scan
Of him who speaks ; but thus began :—
“ Such spoils I seek not, want not, hear !
Such spoils I dread, abhor, and fear !
They are more meet for thee than I”—
She gazed into his quivering eye,
And saw a passion flitting by.
“ Ah, lady, though thy soft eyes see
Me blacker, viler than I be ;

E'en though my soul should be as base
As is the texture of my face ;
It was my hope, a man to prove,
And nestle in the joys of love."

" And couldst thou think this love to find
Within the breast of womankind ?
Couldst thou imagine love to spring
From out the fierce death adder's sting ?
Thy very form affrights a life,
Thy presence sets the soul in strife !"

" I seek not then thy love ; but thou
Must to my will and wishes bow :
For woman, know thou art my slave—
As beautiful as thou art base !
I did but ask respect and trust ;—
Now I command ; obey thou must !"

" Thou hast the power—I stand in awe—
Thy strength is great, and strength is law !"
No more was spoke, but boiling veins
Sent blood careering through their frames,
Like ice that melteth with warm suns,
And o'er gigantic mountains runs.

She views his spoils, his captives all,
From shady seat 'neath gloomy wall :
Expresses great surprise and joy,
With look of most assured annoy.

He smiles and laughs, and smiling peers ;
His words ring, tingle in her ears !
The show is done, the viewing o'er—
They seem not as they seem'd before ;
Each seeks secluded spot, and there
Breathe their remorse upon the air.

And now the shouts of arm'd men
Through all the courtyard ring again !
The chief, and all his men, prepare
Once more the jaws of death to dare.
Another expedition plann'd,
They sally forth, a gorgeous band !
Bright mountings, neighing steeds of war,
Pistol, and knife, and scimitar,
All make a fierce and great display
In golden radiance of the day.
Arminza—on a prancing steed
Of purest, best Arabian breed,
That bounds and swerves his arching neck,
Rattling rich trappings that do deck
His silken skin—doth sit, the pride
Of those who joyous round him ride.
Nor turns he once his head, but straight
Bounds through the slow, unfolding gate.
From window, with a beating heart,
She views the noisy band depart ;

And tall above his fellow men,
'Way down the long and stretching glen,
She sees the form of him who should
Be dear to her as her own blood.
A shiver, horrible though slight,
Steals through her bosom at the sight ;
And lifting eyes to sunshine fair,
From her pressed lips escapes a prayer.

The hour is eve, and soft and fair,
With scarce a murmur in the air !
On silken couch Iola lay
Whiling the tedious hours away.
A censer with a sweet perfume
Filled with deliciousness the room ;
And through the dimly lighted place
Shines, softly sweet, luxurious taste.
Rich ornamental jars that can
But come from China or Japan ;
And finest bronzes in array—
And paintings from fair Italy ;
And sculpture ta'en when Greece was young,
And Homer lisped upon the tongue.
Beneath her feet, of crimson hue,
And bordered with sweet shade of blue,
A carpet o'er the floor was spread
Which seem'd to sink beneath the tread.

A lamp, with shade of roseate light,
Kept out the day, kept out the night ;
Yet lit the place with softest gleams,
And flooded all with sweetest beams.
All is in harmony divine,
And gleaming 'neath the lamp's soft shine,
It tends to make the soul forget
That earth is burdened with regret.
There is around an atmosphere
So sweet, so delicate, so pure,
That one might think the softest sigh
Would wake a slumbering angel nigh.

The arras quivers, and there stands
A willing slave to wait commands ;
Who heareth quick her lady sigh,
And gazeth on her with full eye :—
“Why mourn, sweet lady, couldst thou not
Complain more at a worser lot?
My lord, 'tis true, but well thou know'st
A cause is never lost, till lost !”
“Good maid, my only, only friend,
Unto mine own commands attend !
Thou know'st, full well, thy lord to me
Is nought, nor ever can he be !
Then cease, for never canst thou know
The depth of my despair and woe.”

“ But lady, list, am I not here
 To banish thy despair and fear ?
 Must I not unto thee attend
 As servant, slave, or humble friend ?
 Then let me, lady, let me try
 To drive that long, unending sigh
 From out thy heart, and I were blest ! ”
 Iola then her maid caresst :
 And lay they in each other’s arms,
 Forgetting fate and life’s alarms—
 And the soft laugh with joy melodious sighing
 charms.

Then said the maid to Iola :—
 “ My lord, ere he did go away
 Made you a present of four slaves :
 Two men, two women, they must be
 Your own attendants :—the gift craves
 Some token of respect from thee !
 I’ll send them hither——” “ No, ah, no !
 Why should I thus be tortured so ?
 Let them remain where now they stay,
 I care not for such gifts—to-day.”
 “ But one is minstrel, or hath been,
 I know it well, for I have seen
 And heard him strike soft, sweet, and clear
 His harp, oh lady, and my ear

Ne'er drank such rapt'rous sounds—" "Away,
I cannot hear such strains—to-day!"
"Ah, say not so, indeed, indeed,
I wish it, but thy breast to cheer!
My heart and soul do for thee bleed—
I would not have thee sigh a tear
For all the universe, ah, hear
My prayer, oh, lady sweet, and heed!"
She answered neither yes nor no,
But on her couch her form did throw;
And hid her face in cushion soft,
To all, except her sorrows, lost.
The maid took silence for a "yes,"
And swift and softly made egress
From the still chamber; sought the room
Where sat the minstrel, and as soon
As entering, "Quick, arise, I bring
My lady's word, she bids thee sing!
Nay, come, why dost thou gaping stand?
My lady's word is a command!"
She seized, and led him by the hand.

They entered, and the sweet perfume
That luscious floated through the room—
The velvet pile,—the roseate light
That streamed upon the minstrel's sight—
All flooded his awakening soul
With thoughts he could, nor would control;

And million fancies swiftly fly,
And find their utt'rance in a sigh.
He started, at the sound afraid
His thoughts his bosom had betray'd !
He caught a look from Elza's eye,
That gleamed upon him flashingly :
Then turned he round, and through sweet
gloom
Of dimly lit, yet lustrous room,
Saw, as upon her couch she lay,
The beauteous form of Iola
Gleam, soft as stars of milky way.
He could not see her face :—her arms
And part of her sweet bosom's charms
Exposed were, and to his sight
They seemed like visions of delight,
Viewed in the dreaming hours of night.

He seizes now his harp, and slow
His fingers o'er the sweet strings go :
A prelude, soft as love that lies
Within the depths of woman's eyes !
And here and there a deeper note
Doth through the perfumed chamber float,
And then a dying sigh, melodious and remote.
He stopp'd, and struck his harp again,
And floated forth a charmèd strain,

Soft as the softest of sweet dreams,
When fancy, most delightful, streams
Delicious feelings through the frame,
As bord'ring on exquisite pain.
He turns with look upon the maid,
His timid glance his thoughts betray'd :
She nods assentingly, and he
Begins in soft and mellow key.

Oh, fair one, with the radiant eyes,
Stars of our earthly paradise—
What means this glistening tear ?
This strange and anxious fear ?
This world of melting sighs ?

Ah, think not, sweet, that love is dead,
That blisses rapturous are fled,
Because the world doth seem
Like an unhappy dream
Before thy fancy spread.

Wait, maiden, thou shalt happy be !
Thy love, he comes—waft misery
Upon the winds, o'er mountains, waves,
And through the dark precincts of graves—
And taste sweet immortality !

What though the earth should gloomy prove,
And mortals darkly, strangely move
'Mid their own realms of men ? the night
Must pass, gloom but prepares the light,
And bursts the sun a world of love.

He ceased, and on the trembling air
The sweet notes lay, a loving sigh ;
As though a spirit breathèd there
Soft murmurs of ethereal sky.
The harp is still, but yet the strain
Wanders like magic through the brain,
And fills it with delicious pain.
Iola rose, and turned her eyes
Upon the minstrel, and surprise
Sat on her brow ; for he who stood
Before her seem'd of fair manhood,
And noble, and his open face
Bore on it vividly the trace
Of conflict with the world, and thought
Had here and there a furrow wrought.
He was not young, nor was he old !
The curling locks of bronzèd gold
That o'er his neck profusely stray,
Are streakèd here and there with grey.
He seems both young and old, as though
He were composed of joy and woe ;

Yet firm they do not on him sit,
But o'er his face continuous flit ;
As hurrying clouds forever chase
Each other round the sun's bright face.

"Minstrel, thy name ?" the lady cries ;
"Zura," the minstrel soft replies !
"Whence come you, and what are you, speak?"
And flashed her eye and changed her cheek.
"Born I in Andalusia,
Where winds are sweet and skies are gay,
And loving lights of radiant eyes
Flash bright and soft as stars from skies.
My people, ah, what need I say
Of them, since dead, alas, are they ;
Each to the grave hath slowly passed—
I, of my house, am left, the last.
The harp, my joy when life was bright,
Was still my friend in drearest night ;
We sallied forth, my harp and I,
Our home the fields, our roof the sky ;
And loved each other's company !
A minstrel, lady, nothing more,
A wanderer, desolate and poor ;
For ever doomed this earth to roam,
Till death provide me with a home.

I played and sang with yonder train,
But the fierce Moor, Arminza, came—
Now broken all—the rest is pain.”

She eyed him with a strange, sad look,
As though her soul great pity took !
His eyes with longing gazed in hers :
A glow within her bosom stirs !
She cannot tell, she knows not why
She feeleth thus beneath his eye ;
And yet a tremor fills the whole
Of her half-dead and slumbering soul.
“ Go, leave me, minstrel, thou again
Shalt please with thy melodious strain ;
For I would have thee lift the veil
Off thy past life, and tell the tale
Of all thy wanderings.” His head
Bowed gently as these words she said,
The arras parted, and the two
Were separated from the view.

Canto the Third.

The night is chill, the wind is high,
There's not a planet in the sky ;
The moon is gone, and darkness all
Shrouds heaven and earth with direst pall.

The owl from yonder withered tree
Stares in the blackness of the night—
It dare not trust itself in flight,
It knows not whither it would flee.
Ghosts seem to wander in the air,
And doleful moan in dread despair ;
And now, and now a strange, wild shriek
That mortal tongue could never speak,
Horribly rushes overhead—
A parting cry, a virtue fled.
Far off, in heaven's eternal deeps,
The thunder roars, and roaring keeps
Profoundest time with wailing song,
That soars the misty heavens among.
And ever and anon a gleam
Of lightning weird illuminates the scene ;
As death-lights in a place of woe
The ghostly ceremonies show.

A room of dear delight, the scene
Doth flit ! a shaded lamp's sweet gleam
Threw soft, delicious rays ; and shone,
Profusely, two loved forms upon,
Who lived within each other's eyes,
And filled their heaven with languid sighs.
The minstrel, aye, no longer slave,
Ignobly low and meanly base—

But man, with stirring soul and heart,
Now feels a giant ;—Cupid's dart
Hath pierced him keen, and all the earth
Has grown a thing of love and worth.
And she—ah, love has come at last ;
Her heaven is won, her mis'ry past !
No more shall sorrow fill the void
Of life. No more her hopes destroy'd
Shall be, and softly shall her breast
Tremble with rapture unsuppressed.

They love ; the danger of that love
Full well they know, and hope to prove
Truer in time of trouble ; they
The dictates of their hearts obey.
Such love is wrong, the conscience cries,
Such love is sweet, the heart replies !
And though the bitter and the sweet
Upon the surface plainly meet,
And bitterness should stronger prove—
The sweet is love, and hearts take love.

Upon a couch fair Iola
Reposed, and at her feet he lay
And gazed into her eyes—a gaze
That set her very soul ablaze ;
And as he sweetly lisps her name,
Spreads o'er her face a rosy flame

Of tenderest hue, like heavenly dyes
That illustrate the morning skies.
“Mine own,” he cries, and winds his arms
About her witching figure’s charms,
“Mine own for evermore!” And she
Responsive answered to his cry—
“Thine own, ah, let it ever be,
For now and immortality—
Love cannot, cannot die!”
The mistress and the slave! Yet love
Knows but an equal, and hearts move
In the same sphere of thought when they
Love truly; and the lengthened kiss
Softly subdues imperious sway,
And souls go out to souls in bliss.
Oh, why should lives be joined to lives
That are unfitted? Hate survives
When e’en respect is gone and dead,
And happiness and virtue fled!
’Tis binding of two lives that kills;
And forced and perjured love instils
Within the breast a horror. She,
Though hating him, must loyal be—
It is her duty; she must feel
Those horrid arms around her steal,
When her whole soul revolts: I ween
She is but human, or doth seem.

They sat alone, with arms entwined,
And on the soft and perfumed wind
Fell sighs and whispers, and the frame
Is tingling with a pleasant pain.
They know not if they live or dream,
So beautiful their life doth seem.
All, all is love, and sorrow's fled,
And misery and pain are dead.
They sat, and on each other's breast
The head droops dreamily to rest :
All earthly fear is dead, for they
In soundest sleep delightful lay.
And then she sighed, and then a trace
Of agitation crossed her face,
Discernèd by the roseate light
That issued sweetly soft and bright.
And then her bosom heaved, as tho'
Beneath it lay a world of woe.
And then a whispered word was lost,
And o'er her lover's heart she crossed
Her hands, as if to shield that breast—
And closer to his side she prest.
And still her dream, whate'er it be,
Brings her no sweet felicity !
With fierce and frequent gasps she breathes,
And strangely wild her bosom heaves.

Her teeth are clenched, her face is pale,
As though fierce agonies assail
Her soul ; and wildest fancy brings
Despair with harsh imaginings.
She clasbeth now her lover fast,
As though this rapture were her last ;
And pressed upon his lips a kiss,
And seem'd to smile at thought of bliss ;
Then opening wild her wondering eye
She sees Arminza standing by !

A startled cry—a soul in fear—
Rings through the perfumed atmosphere !
One quick, wild glance, and then she prest
Her face upon her lover's breast,
But found it chill and wet, withdrew—
His linen was of crimson hue.
She touched her face ; her hand was smear'd
With fearful substance she had fear'd.
Oh, horror ! On her palm there stood
A huge clot of the minstrel's blood !
She rose, like one in dazèd dream,
Not certain if what can be seen
Be true ;—'twas so, for in the light
Arminza falls upon her sight.
“ This is thy work ? ” He nods his head,
And gazes on the minstrel dead,

Whose pallid face upturnèd lay,
And ghastly gleamed 'neath lamp's soft ray.
“It is my work !” he answers, and
Holds up a dagger in his hand,
All clotted with a crimson stain—
A substance which she dare not name !
“I rode before my horsemen, they
Are waiting for me on the way ;
How couldst thou, fool, so simple prove
As let thy weak, adulterate love
Exposed be to every eye,
And hope thy master, woman, I
To blind ?”

“Aye, Moor, well may’st thou speak
Now!” And the life-blood on her cheek
Made her a fierce strange sight ; her hair
Flew wildly o'er her bosom bare,
Which beat tumultuously ! “A day
Hadst thou been longer, Moor, away
Thou hadst not found us here !” He smil'd
And gleam'd his eyes in anger wild.
“Fair, false, oh, ever thus allied !
Woman, I know not why I gave
Thee life ?” “I asked it not !” she cried,
“But would have sooner sunk in grave

With him, than live in heaven with you !
I loved him, Moor, dost understand ?
Dost one of thy complexion's hue
 Think he can woman's love command ?
Go, devil, get thee from my sight,
Thou'st done thy work—this very night
Shall see thee damned in hell !" She spoke
 And knelt and kiss'd the pale, cold face
Of him who lay there still :—there broke
 A cry, that, ringing through the place,
Almost awoke the dead : the Moor
Bounded along the velvet floor
To where she knelt, and from the clay
He tried to force her form away.
In vain—she held the corpse, and both
Were drawn along the carpet soft !
And as the blood welled out amain,
It streaked the blue with crimson stain.

" Well, be it so !" he cried, " if thou
Dost want him, thou shalt have him, now !"
As horrid thoughts within arise,
And sparkle from his glittering eyes ;
And, turning from her madly, he
Laughed with a maniacal glee.
He seizes all the silken cords
That the rich furniture affords ;

And laughs as o'er his work he bends ;
And knots and joins the several ends,
And makes them into one ; and so
The pieces to a long cord grow.
And then, with oath and laughter coarse,
He bound her to the bloody corse !
The lamp expires, the gilded room
Becomes a chill and fearful tomb.

* * *

That morning, as the early day
Broke o'er the world, a dull, dead light,
Two slaves were seen to wend their way
Unto a bank that rose in sight—
A river ran below ; they lay
A burden by its side—a splash !
And madly on the waters dash.



SYDONIA: A DREAM.

[*Sydonia* is a metrical name for Sydney, and the scene takes place in an imaginary castle, situated on one of the rocky headlands which command the entrance to its magnificent bay. Hence the poem is *a dream* inasmuch as it only *supposes* traditions which the country would have been possessed of, had civilisation existed on its shores in the old days of romance.]

Canto the First.

I.

UPON Sydonia's bay the waves are bright,
And o'er Sydonia's deep the winds are light ;
The liquid azure smiles, while o'er its face
The wavelets rush in an excited race !
On, on they speed, as with a frenzied glee,
To kiss the white neck of the sparkling sea.
The virgin daisy lifts its modest head,
To virgin masses that around are spread :
And fair the yellow cups shed their sweet bliss,
And earth reposes 'neath a golden kiss.
From yonder dizzy cliff the seagull wheels,
And through the air, in joyous transport reels :
Shoots, swift as vengeance, o'er the waves that sleep,
And views its form reflected in the deep :
Lifts high its head, the zephyrs sweet among,
And to creation pours its gladsome song.

II.

Aye, such are scenes of peace, but there must come,
At times, the call of trumpet, and of drum !
The arming of the troops, the many feet
That with precision on the earth's face beat :
The hearts that strengthen, and the nerves that grow
Stronger and stronger, as they near the foe !
The madd'ning charge, the excited shout—the sky
Receives the living, and the dying cry.

III.

On yonder bloody field where death is rife,
And human engines murder human life,—
Behold, they rush, nor pause with frighted breath,
Though bounding in the awful jaws of death.
And mark yon youth : no paleness on his face
Mirrors a faintness—terror shows no trace ;
At every stroke of his well-temper'd sword
A mortal falls upon the blood-stain'd sward :
With fast, firm lips, and fiercely-flashing eye,
He deals out death to all who with him vie !
Bellona, goddess, watches o'er the fray,
And smiles upon our blue-eyed youth to-day.

IV.

On yonder rock that rears its head on high,
Behold a castle mounting to the sky !

See how Dame Nature, to repress the shock
Of billows, lifts on high this mighty rock,
Far from the level of the shining sea,
To where hoarse winds dance with a madden'd glee.
Upon that rock a castle stands, whose walls
Are moulded to its form, whose face appals
Almost the very winds ; and mortals know
Its legend, and repeat it as they go,—
And fright themselves in singing of its woe.

THE LEGEND.

LORD GREGORY, master of yon place,
Pursued a student's lone career ;
And in the paths of knowledge walk'd
For many a long and weary year.

He'd gazed on ocean's glassy plain,
And sought its secrets deep, from youth ;
And slow the years upon him came
And vain he sought to know the truth.

Long nights he'd watch'd the moon and stars
From his high pinnacle of earth ;
And ponder'd on their radiant rays,
And marvell'd at their glorious birth.

At eve he'd seen the sun go down,
And set the western world afire ;
And in his breast such longings came
That could not—like bright beams—expire.

Books, from which knowledge could be gain'd,
He'd read in yonder tower alone !
And yet his soul kept aching for
Those things which must remain unknown.

No festive sights the castle cheer'd
No rambling youth stray'd through the hall ;
The place with silence was adorned,
And gloom o'erspread it as a pall.

The student from his room would walk
To yonder treach'rous precipice ;
And gazing o'er, with Nature talk,
And from depression find release.

The dashing spray, the roaring wind,
Into his ears pour their sad tale ;
And from the deep, the sea-bird's note
Comes flying to him on the gale.

The pond'rous rocks, so bold and proud,
Rear'd their scarr'd faces to the sky !
All Nature seem'd to cry aloud,
And yet he could not read the cry !

Aloft, the blue celestial space
Attracts, and holds his wandering eye ;
And tears steal gently down his face,
And from his bosom comes a sigh.

“ O Lord, thou maker of the world,
Thy blessings on Thy child bestow ;
And teach me how to know Thee more,
And lead me from this path of woe !

“ Oh ! tell me, if in yonder skies
Thou liv’st, and that the brave and free
Shall in Thy mansions fair, abide
With peace, and happiness,—and thee !

“ Oh, could I but to Thy abode
Depart,—I’d say farewell to breath !
For human life is but a sigh ;
And there is little real, save death !”

And thus, on many a day, alone,
He sought the cliff : he saw the rain
In torrents fall,—he heard the moan
Of dying winds, and felt their pain.

So one bright day, while climbing o’er
The headland steep,—within a glen
Alone, he found a woman fair,
Hid from the wicked haunts of men.

He stagger'd back, and would have fled,—
A lovely hand his arm detain'd ;
And eyes look'd smiling into his,
And soon his courage was regain'd.

“ Why flee away ? ” a sweet voice said,
And azure eyes repeat the same :
And earnest looks on him were shed
Of innocence—unmix'd with shame.

The damsel who before him stood
Was young, and beautiful, and fair ;
And her unruffled features showed
Harsh care had never rested there.

Her forehead was as marble white,
Her hair in loose luxuriance roll'd
About her lovely form, and fell
A glorious mass of living gold !

The deep-blue eye—the parted lip !
The pearls that glow—the thoughts that rise !
The heaving breast—the blushing cheek !
The heart that bursts itself with sighs !

Lord Gregory, lost in wonder, gazed
On that fair form before his eyes ;
For sudden light has power to daze,
As sudden darkness to disguise !

He look'd, a smile lit up her face,
Her bright eyes sparkled, and her cheek
A gentle blush suffused, while she
With silver accents thus did speak :

“ Sir Knight, and since upon my bower
Of rustic ease, of sorrows free,
Thou hast, unknown, intruded thus,
Pray know, 'tis not for me—and thee !”

“ Fair lady, I your pardon ask !
It was by accident I fell
Across your sweet retreat—I knew
It not—I swear ! forgive, farewell !”

“ Nay, then, Sir Knight, your pardon too
I ask.” The lady turn'd her head,
And blushing, look'd a look that had
More in 't than can be sung or said.

“ Lady, in me behold no knight,
No man who seeks the world's alarms,
But one who, 'neath the face of heaven,
Doth revel in creation's charms.

“ A lover of sweet nature I,
A student, struggling and obscure,
Though doubly rich in worldly wealth,
I am in knowledge doubly poor.

“ Great joy is mine, O Lady, when
Through these rich scenes I fondly rove!
Alone, nor human soul to mar
My commune with the things I love.

“ And yet what ignorance I show,
When from this world’s delights I flee !
For love is in itself a heaven
That opes to all humanity !”

“ Ah, sir, your honey’d words attract
The guileless heart of one so young ;
And I would fain believe you, but
Such words are ever on the tongue !

“ Oft, oft have I been told that man
Was deep and cunning—that array’d
In virtue’s garments he would come,
And triumph o’er a helpless maid.

“ And yet on thee, methinks, I see
An open brow, a thoughtful face :
And, henceforth, for thy sake I’ll say
All men are not perfidious, base !

“ And now adieu ! Oh, fair retreat,
No longer art thou mine ;—alas !
That ever through yon sacred screen,
Fierce man’s destroying form should pass !

“ Long had I sought for a repose,
Where I could my seclusion make,
And leave behind a world of woes,
And all my former friends forsake.

“ The world was gay, it suited not
My simple tastes : I sought release ;
And in this wild, enchanting spot,
Had hoped at least—for earthly peace !

“ But stay, you are a stranger, and
Your name I know not, and my tale
Is very long,—and well I know
To weary you it would not fail !”

“ Nay, by my troth, no tale of yours
Could weary me,” the lord replied :
The maiden cast a timid glance
Upon his eager brow—and sigh’d.

“ Then, as yon golden orb reclines
This moment midway in the sea,
Why prithee come to-morrow, and
I will relate it all to thee !”

Lord Gregory kiss’d her hand, and bow’d,
And whisper’d softly, as in fear :
“ To-morrow, then—at noon, fair heart,—
If Heaven allows, I will be here !”

He lingers sweetly o'er the kiss,
And tremors through his bosom roll,
Which make his heart beat loud, and shake
The great foundations of his soul.

The bower he leaves behind, and on
He wanders through the magic scenes :
He moves, yet knows not how he moves,
He dreams, yet knows not what he dreams !

He reaches soon his castle's gate,
And rushes to his study, where
He hopes to banish thoughts that come,
With books,—but leaves them in despair.

Then almost with a madman's speed
He clambers to the topmost tower ;
And gazing on the raging waves,
Whiles dreamingly the midnight hour.

The night air chills, he feels it not ;
The rain descends, it wets him through ;
The lightning plays around,—he stands
And thus defies the stormy view :

“ Howl on, ye elements; my soul
Expands above your puny roar !
The heavens alone my thoughts control,
Your thundering ceases with the shore !”

Anon, he to his chamber goes,
With weary and uncertain feet ;
And on his couch his form he throws,
And seeks for sweet repose—in sleep.

One vision floats before his eyes,
One vision clasps he to his breast,
One vision answers him with sighs,
One vision does he lull to rest.

And now the morning breaks, and lo !
He wanders forth, her bower to find :
His heart droops 'neath its own fierce glow,—
A thousand thoughts assail his mind.

Now he with strange emotion stands
Before the bower—his nerve to gain :
An arm pulls back the leaves, and he's
— In beauty's presence once again.

The maiden cast her timid eyes,
With sainted looks, to earth and sky :
Lord Gregory, by the way replies
In earnest with a mournful sigh.

And then to him she told her tale,
With streaming eyes and heaving breast :
And blooming cheeks are deadly pale,
And all by sorrow is oppress.

Thus they the long hours while away,
He with his anger, she with tears :
And in the friendship of that day,
They knew each other's heart for years.

And as night's shadows creep once more
O'er all creation forth he glides
From her sweet bower, with spirit light,
And soul that on the zephyr rides.

But, ah ! when noon came round again,
He'd seek her beauteous presence, when
With eyes aglow with love's bright flame,
He felt a very king of men.

So day by day they met, until
A week with lightning speed flew by ;
And love had bloom'd in Gregory's breast,
And all he yet had done was sigh.

And now the hour at length arrived,
When the soft silence of this grove
Was broken by the passionate words
Of Gregory's fierce, adoring love.

He told how blank the world had been,
How all his soul was dead to worth
Of mortal things—till he had seen
Her glorious form ; then heaven was earth !

And what were earth without her now ?

What heaven, what life, what all that gives
Our mortal frames immortal hopes
If from her sweet embrace he lives ?

“ Listen : if thou refuse my love,
By all the gods in heaven, I swear,
From forth the limits of this grove
My soul shall wing its way through air !

“ I love, I love ! Ah, heed my cry !
Ope, ope to me thy tender breast ;
And let our joyous streams of bliss
Join, and embrace, and sink to rest !

“ There’s nought can please my spirit here
Or my undying love control,
Save thee ! and for thy love I’ll sell
My chance of heaven—my very soul !”

A fierce, sharp light gleam’d quickly from
The maiden’s eyes,—then pass’d away ;
And on her placid brow was left
The clearness of a cloudless day.

But as his ravings louder grew,
The fierceness to her face return’d ;
And o’er it spread a darker hue,
While fire within her eyeballs burn’d.

“ I'll take thee at thy word,” she cried,
While dark, deep passions through her roll ;
“ I'll give thee love,—I'll be thy bride,—
If thou'l exchange for it—thy soul !

“ I love thee, but can never be
Nearer than I have been, unless
With your immortal soul you buy
My love, my life, and my caress !

“ If you agree, a life of ease
Awaits you,—I myself will be
For ever by your side, to please,
And drive away dull misery.

“ Your natural span of life shall run,
No accident shall steal your breath,
And when your day of life is done—
There only comes that thing call'd death ;

“ Which is a myth at best—a nothing !
A thing at which poor mortals rave ;
But listen : as I love, I swear
That little lies beyond the grave !”

“ I care not what beyond it lies,
So I with thee can have my day ;
And when this mortal body dies,
Then my immortal soul can pay !”

“ Then bare thy breast, and cut a wound
 Whereby a little purple flood
 May flow ; for all agreements say
 These compacts must be seal’d with blood.”*

He bared his breast, and with a knife
 He quickly tore the flesh apart :
 It seem’d as though those ruddy drops
 Were bitter tears from inmost heart.

“ Now, my familiar, with thy deed
 Arise !” And through the earth there came
 A roaring noise, a shock, some smoke,
 And then a scathing sheet of flame.

“ Behold, great mistress, at your call
 I come,” the apparition said ;
 And, with a bland and playful smile,
 It bow’d politely to the maid.

With one quick glance it saw the whole,—
 The bleeding breast, the pale, cold face ;
 And knew too soon another soul
 Would seek the warmth of hell’s embrace.

It seized the deed, and placed it on
 Lord Gregory’s beating, bleeding breast ;
 And as the wound heal’d up, it thus
 Its victim in few words address’d :

* See Marlowe’s *Faustus*.

“ Now, she is yours through mortal life ;
Go live, while Nature lends you breath,
And seek not to avert your choice,
Or life shall pass away in death !”

And when through earth it disappear'd,
From Gregory's lips there came a moan,
Which was the only life that show'd
The statue was not made of stone.

And now the fiend—no longer maid—
Encased him with her snowy arms,
And whispering rapturous words of love,
Drove from his mind all wild alarms.

And see, towards his castle grey,
With arms entwined and beating hearts,
They wander gently on their way,
Whilst love—yes, love,—its balm imparts.

But once within the castle's walls,
A newer, gayer life begins :
The reveller's shout sounds through the halls
And he is best who has most sins.

All that was wrapp'd in studious gloom
Is now with lustful brightness bold ;
Whilst myriad lights adorn each room,
And all explains the power of gold.

And here, surrounded with his friends,
Lord Gregory's riotous life began,
Which pleases vainness while it lasts,
But utterly debases man.

Long into summer's scented morn,
They'd seen the golden god arise
Far in the blue, and, blushing, he
Suffused the bosom of the skies.

Night after night, when wine's strong power
Enter'd their heads, mock virtues fell ;
And then, through all the midnight hour,
Cries rang out which might frighten hell.

There youth and beauty, with the stamp
Indelible of vice and crime,
Waste, 'neath the radiance of the lamp,
Lives that with purity should shine ;

And Death, that ghastly monster, stalks
Around, and smiles, and breathes unseen
Upon the bosoms of the fair,
And joins in every festive scene.

And Gregory leads the merry dance,
With drunken, careless, easy grace ;
And then sinks in his mistress' arms.
And nestles in her vile embrace.

Aye, 'neath her evil spell, his life
Grows daily worse—his words appal—
And e'en his inmost friends are shock'd,
To see the greatness of his fall.

* * * * *

The night is dark, the sea is high,
No star through the wild blackness beams,
The roaring winds tear through the sky,
With screechings of a million fiends.

A thousand lights within the walls
Of Gregory's castle glare to-night ;
For pleasure fills the gilded halls,
And luxury and vice unite.

Upon a royal throne of gold
Sat, smiling at the joyous scene,
One whose enchanting face should make
Her reign supreme as beauty's queen.

Well mightst thou, Gregory, curse the day
That brought thy wretched form to light,
For hope is dead to thee, its ray
Is sunk for ever from thy sight !

And now the music's merry peal
Falls on the intoxicated ear ;
And vulgar jests evoke loud laughs,
And coarsely drunkards shout and cheer.

And still the feast goes on, the wine
Flows brightly from the golden bowl ;
And sparkling eyes, and heaving breasts,
Tempt, thrill, and fascinate the soul.

And all around soft speeches make
A Cupid's nest of this great hall ;
Heads bend, eyes sparkle, ears are strain'd,
To catch the rapt'rous words that fall.

So all goes happily, and joy,
Lascivious joy, o'er all pervades ;
And if a serious thought intrudes,
In Pleasure's presence soon it fades.

And Gregory, in the midst of all,
Within his mistress' arms entwined,
Laughs with a silly glee at things
That would erstwhile have shock'd his mind.

And now upon his feet he sways
With slow, and stupid, drunken measure,
And cries out in a dull, harsh voice,
“ My noble friends—I drink to Pleasure !”

But ere the cup unto his lips
Had pass'd, a roaring, rushing sound
Was heard, the castle's mighty walls
Shook, and seem'd toppling to the ground.

The thousand lights that gaily burn'd,
By that terrific shock had been
Hurl'd, hissing, from their silvern stands,
And nought but darkness now is seen.

Mute, terrified, the crowd crouch down,
With beating hearts and faces white ;
They hold their breath—they dare not move—
For Heaven will judge their souls to-night !

And once again they hear that noise,
And all with bursting eye-balls stare
Through the thick darkness, till there comes
A fierce light of a ghastly glare.

But hist, hist ! God ! what cometh now
Enveloped in that robe of flame ?
Each soul that gazes on that brow
Hath said a thousand times *that name !*

Lord Gregory saw the monster dread
(No longer in a drunken trance),
And with a blazing soul beheld
It slowly unto him advance.

“ For thee I come !”—the vision spoke,
With fierce and flashing looks. “ Thy time
On earth is run, the compact now
Is ended, and thy soul is mine !”

But Gregory, now with terror struck,
Falls reeling, senseless, from his chair ;
While from his lips a frightful shriek
Escapes upon the tainted air.

The monster, with disdainful stare,
Stood, gazing on the grovelling clay :
“Thou hadst an everlasting soul !
Ah, fool, to throw that soul away !”

Once more that strange and rushing noise,
The floor divides, and from their sight
The evil vision disappears,
And darkness is again their light !

* * * * *

And since that time strange sights and sounds
Are seen and heard, when tempests blow :
And all agree, within its walls
Foul spirits wander to and fro.

v.

Within this castle's walls a chieftain great
Reposes, in an almost royal state,
Yet lives within himself,—for he is one
Though all-surrounded, yet remains alone.

Dark, with a pair of piercing eyes, which seem
Too horrible for aught but fearful dream ;
Features cut sharp, and bloodless lips compress'd,
That try, in vain, to hide his soul's unrest ;
And raven locks that, floating o'er his neck,
Seem to grin at the hideous head they deck.
And yet throughout his huge and gilded halls,
With boist'rous shouts the noisy rev'ller bawls ;
And feasts, and music, with the merry chime
Of laughing voices, while away the time.
And yet, though Pleasure stares him in the face,
Holds out her arms, and looks a sweet embrace,
Parts her bright lips, and smiles her sweetest
smile,—
His soul with that of hers she cannot reconcile.

VI.

Possess'd of wealth, almost without an end,
Demina, lord, possesses not a friend :
Nor is there one amid that festive throng
Who shares his deeper thoughts. And, as among
The laughing crowds he thrusts his ghostly head,
The laughter ceases, and each gapes as dead.
And though he wanders in their presence, he
Knows that his presence bringeth misery ;

And often do his strange, wild stories make
Excited souls of listening hearers quake ;
And often, too, with gleaming eyes of fire,
And face lit up with demoniacal ire,
Hath he arose, and called on Gregory's name,
And dared the fires of hell, with their unceasing
 pain.

VII.

Within this castle's walls a maiden fair
Is manacled with golden chains of care :
Demina, sole protector, seeks her love,
But she has pledged it.—And as heaven's above
No mortal shall constrain her to depart
From the bright image in her loving heart.
For there was one within that castle who
Was young and handsome, with great eyes of
 blue ;
He was a stranger, and affairs of state
Had brought him to Demina's castle's gate.
Tho' young in years, the world his nurse had
 been,
And knowledge to him with each changing scene
Had come. Oft on the field of battle—where
All is confusion, murder, and despair :

Where lives are spent to swell a nation's fame,
And thousands sink to gild a single name :
Where cold, grim Death his awful wings expand,
And direst misery shrouds a smiling land—
Hath he appear'd. But, ah ! he now is seen
With Zoe by his side, and love's bright dream
Begins. No longer do the castle's sullen walls
Like prison stones appear—as even falls,
He comes—and gloom transformèd is to light—
And joy spreads o'er her soul a radiance soft and
bright.

VIII.

Within this castle's walls there is a bower
Laden with verdure, sweeten'd by a flower
That wantons o'er its sides in sportive bliss,
And soothes it ever with a perfumed kiss.

* * * * *

The night is cold and dark, the moon
Tries hard to pierce the pitchy gloom
Of countless clouds that flutter o'er
The face of heaven. The ocean's roar
Comes up with its unhappy tale
On every rising of the gale :
And people talking, listen, listen
To its sad moan, and soft eyes glisten,



And hearts with one accord do leap
With prayers for those upon its deep :
And whispering dames, in awful fright,
Shrink, and cry : " Mercy, what a night !"
And in the corner, near the fire,
While sparks and flames shoot higher, higher,
Long ghostly tales of misery
And harsh privations of the sea
Go round, and as their length unrolls
The children, with affrighted souls,
Hang on the very words that make
Their little hearts with terror quake :
And when the mystic tale is o'er,
And hero's safely reached the shore,
How many tiny hands do raise ?
How many voices sing his praise ?
And boys, intoxicated, see
The glorious life of him at sea.
The human fancy loves to feed
Itself with supernatural deed ;
For in it there's a power that reigns
Triumphant o'er the grandest brains.

IX.

Within this bower love's tender accents flow,
And love's young souls thrill with delicious glow.

Philip and Zoe, from Demina's hate,
Must meet in secret places, to partake
Of love's soft speeches, kisses,—all that brings
The mortal to the soul's imaginings,
And lifts them for a moment from the shrouds
Of life, and wafts them sweetly through the clouds
Of fancy. Ah ! who would kill the joy
That reigns in lovers' breasts ? or who destroy
The purer workings of the heavenly mind,
When men become sublime, and coarser thoughts
refined ?

X.

“ Philip, I come, at last, at last !
List, love. This moment, as I pass'd
Yon little garden, where the fount
Springs gaily from its marble mount,
I heard a voice of texture coarse
Breathing, ‘ The bower,’ in whispers hoarse.
I heard no more,—for, love, I fear'd
I should disturb them if I near'd.
A terror seized my frame, nor could
I even move from where I stood.
Demina's jealousy I know
Is great, but surely,—No, no, no !

I must be mad to think that he
Dared take it on himself to be
Our judge ! And yet, I know not why,
 But yesternight he gazed on thee :
I mark'd him, and his cruel eye
 Gleam'd malice, hatred, jealousy !
And then a wail, a dismal wail,
 Such as the wind alone creates,
Our creaking shutters did assail.
I watch'd him : he was ghostly pale,
 As though the spirits of the Fates
Had risen 'gainst him from the gale,
 And smote his conscience."

XI.

"What care I ?

Ah, love ! fear not : his vengeance will
But trouble ! Sweet, it cannot kill ;
Because for worlds I would not die
Whilst thou remain'st alive. So I,
With trusty sword and conscious heart,
 For thy sweet sake will live, and thou,
Who of my being art a part,
 Shall weave the ringlets round my brow
And kiss me tenderly as now

Years hence. Ah, sweet, the heavens are bright,
And love is of the heavens, and can
They be unmerciful to man
When part of their ethereal light
Is in his bosom bound? Ah, no!
Darling, hope, dream and hope,—dark woe
We'll leave to moody minds that see
Nought in the world but misery;
And since this place oppresses thee,
Unto my castle bright we'll flee,
If thou wilt but consent. Ah, trust
Thyself with me: thou knowest I must
The guardian of thy future be,—
The maker of thy destiny.
Then, Zoe, to my castle come,
Where every day the golden sun
Lights rapturously with tenderest beam
The most divine and radiant scene
That mortal eye beheld. The place
The forms of fairies once did grace.
There songs, fantastic dances, and
Pure music of sweet Fairyland
Drove darkness from that dear abode,
And unto purity and God
Bequeathed it. Darling, and for you
It longeth, as sweet plants for dew:
For nectar to the floweret given
Descendeth purified from Heaven.

There Eden's zephyr sweetly blows,
And Nature in confusion throws
Essence of great delights upon
The brightest spot that ever shone
With light immortal ; there the sky
Looks down on it with envious eye ;
There breezes light were taught to play,
And gods divine to kneel and pray ;
There birds on many-colour'd wing
Warble to their Creator ; there
No harsh sound falls upon the air,
But all is delicate and fair ;
There glories, as the songs they sing,
Are countless.—Then, oh, Zoe, come !
This,—aye, and love,—shall be our home.”

XII.

“ I will with thee away, fond love,
Unto thy castle bright and free,
Where scenes celestial meet the eye,
And warblers sing on every tree.
There, through the mystic wilderness
Of flowers of Paradise will I
Follow thy radiant steps, my love ;
And when thou sighest I will sigh.
And, oh ! no single sorrow, dear,
Shall rend alone that heart of thine ;

For every pang that wrings thy breast
Shall find an echoing chord in mine.
When pale, yet bright, the gentle moon
In the deep vault of heaven expands,
We'll to the magic dells, and seek
For blessings at the fairies' hands ;
And on the bounding river's bank
We'll view the moonbeams gild the stream,
Reflecting back a thousandfold
The brightness of our life-long dream.
And we will walk through golden glades,
And mystic revels act again ;
And music sweet through all their shades
Shall issue from our fairy train.
And thou wilt be a king, and I
Shall be thy queen ; and 'midst the flowers
Our royal throne shall rise, and we
Will rule them with despotic powers.
And there, free from the world's harsh cares,
Where scenes delight, and on the ear
Melodious music falls, we'll live,
As beings of another sphere,
Ah, if such could be ! But I fear
Too far we wander in the air
On our imaginations,—where
Our glorious visions are too fair
For realistic earth !”

XIII.

"Ah, no !

Thou wrongst thyself and me. I'll show
Thee such delightful scenes
That the most vivid of thy dreams
Could never equal. We will glide
Upon the river's silver tide,
In barge that Cleopatra old
Could purchase not with Egypt's gold
We'll view beneath the shining waves
The sirens in their charmèd caves :
And, as perchance we float along,
Some note may reach us of their song.
And then, in midnight's solemn hour,
I'll take thee to the fairies' bower,
And pluck the violets' leaves, whereby
Sweet beauty may with beauty lie ;
And as thou sleepest some fond scene
That thou in happiest days hast seen
Will come to thee in blissful dream.
There Dian, weary of the chase,
Could find no fairer resting-place ;
Nor Daphne from Apollo's love
Could flee into a chaster grove.
The days, the months, the years shall pass,--

And love shall live for us, and we,
'Mongst Nature's wild sublimity,
Shall melt into eternity"—

XIV.

"List ! Heard you not a step?" She clasp'd
Him quick and fiercely by the arm,
And made his blood run fast and warm.
He gazed into her great, bright eyes,
Lit by a star that shone from skies
Of darkest hue. "My Zoe, speak !
What means this blanching of the cheek ?
This trembling and this gasping breath,
This terror, as of fearful death ?"
"Canst thou not hear their stealthy tread ?
'Twould almost make the buried dead
Shiver within their clayey bed !
God ! they are coming nearer—see,
See, they advance ! Quick, love, the night
Will suit thy purpose—thou must flee
Nor let them thy beloved form sight.
Fly, Philip, fly !—Nay, darling, nay !—
Go, go, while yet thou art not seen :
The night is dark, the clouds will screen
Thy form from them—'tis death to stay.

Ah, sweet, begone. These men are his,
And he would have me for a wife,
And they will steal away your life,
And I shall die. Fly, fly,—one kiss !
I never, never will be his !
Alas, O God, alas ! the gate
Is forced. They come,—oh, cruel fate !
Good moon, shine, shine, and keep at bay
These fiends, till break the mists of day !
They stop, they will attack us when
Yon lovely orb is gone again
Into the clouds : e'en they are shy
To murder while the watchful eye
Of Heaven's divinity is nigh !"

xv.

The moon now flies behind a cloud,
And Nature in its sable shroud
Again is wrapp'd. And now a roar
Far hoarser than aught heard before,
Is carried shrieking on the air
From the fierce ocean ; and the pair
Within the bower feel o'er their souls
The influence of its wave, which rolls

A mass of terror, dark and drear,
Of hope destroy'd and madden'd fear.
And now a shrilly, piercing moan,
Like to some horrible death-groan,
Upon the cold and bitter wind,
Comes o'er the land, to fright mankind.
And bold nerves quiver, hearts grows chill
At sound of such an omen ill ;
Its ghostly screechings seem to tear,
With horrid glee, the very air,
And play with tenfold vengeance round
The lovers' heads with frightful sound.
And Philip standeth by the door,
His nerve is firm, his heart is sore ;
For on his beating breast there lies
That being who beneath the skies
Is Heaven to his enraptured eyes.
He press'd her closer to his breast :
“ My God ! oh, never can I part
From thee ; so, sweet, lay thee to rest,
And calm the fluttering of thy heart.
Heaven ! thou art merciful and true :
I call to thee in my despair.
Christ Jesus, Thou art everywhere :
Oh, Son of God, to Thee I sue ! ”
He gazes into Heaven—afar
There smileth, sweetly bright, a star.

XVI.

'Tis midnight's hour, and lo the gloom
Of skies is dismal as the tomb ;
The winds that hurry quickly by
Rend the chill air with many a sigh,
And madly rushing onward—die.
And now the guardian moon is fled,
 And Philip can distinctly hear
The moving of their creeping tread,
 And knows the hour of peril's near.
And now a gentle tap is heard
 Upon the door ; yet not a word
In answer. And far in the bower's
Extremest corner Zoe cowers,
Frighten'd, yet not afraid to die,
Should he cease to exist. Her eye
He can distinguish, and it gleams
With all the rich, resplendent beams
Of diamonds, when a ray of light
Streams on them in the darksome night.
With orbs upturn'd, she prays to Heaven :
 And on her face this single star
Smiles down its radiance from afar—
As though what she ask'd was given.

The door glides softly back ; a head
Is thrust in quickly, then retires ;
But thinking them asleep or fled,
It for the “ pride of place ” aspires,
And enters boldy. All it heard
Was a sharp, hissing sound, and then
No mortal agony will pain
That lifeless heap of clay again.
Like an electric flash the sword
Descended, and the streaming blood
Tells an unhappy life is fled ;
For body, severed from the head,
Is weltering in its crimson flood.
And now another comes, and he
Is hurried to eternity !
No sound, no groan, both on the wings
Of phantom Death their horrid flight
Begin,—and to the startled night
Each ghost its ghoulish cadence flings.
The air seems bound with ice, and yet
When drawn it burneth, and the brow,
Although it feeleth cold as snow,
Is by the heat oppressive, wet.
And one infernal gloom pervades
O'er the appalling atmosphere,—
As though the ghosts of damnèd shades
In countless numbers swarm'd the air,

And in the bosom of the wind
Howl'd forth their curses to mankind.
And now, with stealthy step, a third
Appears and listens. Not a word
Or sound do his companions give,
Nor doth he dream they cease to live :
He only thinketh of the cry
Their victim must give ere he die :
And joy at thought of torture lends
Ineffable delight, and rends
His soul with expectation. Again

The sword descends, the stroke is strong
And sure and swift, and yet 'tis wrong,
Because with death it bringeth pain ;
And from the throat while yet there's breath
Escapes the life, afraid of death,
With cry, that through the blackness whirl'd :
Such as great Lucifer, when hurl'd
By God, with all his horrid crew,
To his abode of sable hue,
Might on the winds his rage expend
And howling fall, ne'er to ascend ;
Or yet, while viewing Heaven so fair
Try to corrupt its purer air.
Such was the fearful cry that fill'd
The bower, that e'en the winds were still'd ;

And as each mortal heard the shriek
He cross'd himself, with blanchèd cheek ;
And could not, though he wish'd it, speak.
And now the winds with wild refrain
Take up the burden of the strain,
And with a shrieking, gleeful song
Hurry the dreadful notes along ;
Filling the air with bursting swell,
And dying in the depths of hell.

XVII.

The death-cry o'er the frightened souls
Of mute assassins curdling rolls :
They stand, struck dumb, past power to fly,
Afraid of earth, air, hell, and sky ;
And in their nervous frenzy they
Conceal their swords, so that no ray
Or glimmer of bright steel shall tell
Each other of their purpose fell ;
And hearts of stone by terror fed
Beat lives from icy bosoms. Dead
Each viper seems, and great surmise,
Whilst gazing on their ghastly eyes,
Might view earth's fiends with terror tied
And with hell's vapours petrified.

But now through horror's blackest gloom
Harsh accents fly,—and from the tomb
The frightened ghosts of mortals rear
Once more their heads in mortal air,
And glare with fury at despair :—
“ Break down the door, he is but one !”
No sooner utter'd than 'tis done,
And ere he can escape the crash,
Philip with bitter force they dash
To earth. But quick he rises, and a flame,
Huge, vast, and powerful, through his frame
Hurries :—as through the stormy sky
One sees the lightning shooting by,
And for a moment reigns supreme
O'er all the wildness of the scene,
And lights fierce Nature with a gleam,
Terrific, fierce ; and then, anon,
It flees and is for ever gone.
So he, with superhuman might,
Bounds to his feet, fierce grows the fight ;
And as his sword flies to and fro
From off it drip great drops of woe ;
Back from his flashing blows they bow,
As though an angel whipp'd them. Now
Why stays he ? Why upon his brow
Lays he his hand ? One effort more !
Aloft he lifts his sword—before

Another stroke has chanced to wound,
He totters senseless to the ground.
Ay, all his superhuman power
Had left him at its birth, the flower
Of his great strength was gone, and mild
He lay, and helpless as a child,
So lightning in its fierce wild track
Enters, then leaves the world more black :
The rainbow will the skies illume,
But, ah ! it vanishes too soon :
The loveliest flower in ruin lies
Before its base companion dies :
And mortal angels to us given
Ascend too quickly up to heaven.

XVIII.

Now torches light the fearful gloom
With shapes fantastic, and illume
Each horrid sight that sickening lies
'Midst crimson life, which, flowing, dyes
The bower with hues of sadness ; where
Horror seems written in the air,
And fierce assassins gasp for breath,
So near have they 'scaped frightful death.

"Despatch the dog!"—the order falls,
And e'en the human beasts appals.
List, list!—a cry disturbs the reign
Of Silence, and pure thought would fain
Fancy an angel shriek'd in pain:—
For Zoe to her lover flies,
And frights them with her frightened eyes;
Her arms round him she twineth fast
With tender love's despairing clasp;
Through his cold lips life's precious breath
Still flows, and baffles lingering death;
On his pale brow her lips impress
The sweetness of divine caress;
And 'neath the magic touch of love,
His prostrate figure seemed to move.
She mark'd, and o'er her face a light
Of purest rapture sweetly broke,
Her muteness more than language spoke:
So the fair queen of beauteous night,
Throned on her silent throne, is beautiful and
bright.

Then lifting up her head, her eyes
Shot fire. "Aye, kill him now," she cries;
"Hurl on your ruffians, do not spare
Your wrath: we are the guilty pair!
Aye, guilty, oh, my God! If love
Descendeth not from Heaven above,

Doomed beyond all redemption, I,
To regions of perpetual night ;
For love is my alluring light,—
For love I live, for love I'll die ! ”

XIX.

“Lady, thou think'st that I alone
Have more than human harshness shown
Thou think'st that I write misery
On all my evil eye doth see ;
And that the brightness of these eyes
Gleams fierce defiance to the skies.
Listen, I'll tell thee why the sky
For ever holds my wandering eye.
I loved, but I was spurn'd. Ah, think
How near unto distraction's brink
Such usage drives a soul ! I raved
At first, then humbly prayed
For strength, o'er blessed virtue's tomb,
To bear with fortitude my doom.
But can the wanderer in the night
Walk dangerous paths without a light ?
Without the sun's ethereal ray
Day would be chaos, chaos day !
And when the soul hath ceased to shine,
Nothing of mortal is divine.

Darkness severe enveloped all
My being with its dreary pall,
And moody thoughts began to flow,
And passions fierce within to grow,—
My lamp of life had ceased to glow.
The blackest spot in deepest hell
Is paradise to souls that swell
With love that is not loved again :—
Oh, God ! the agony, the pain !
It kills us, yet we do not die !
It blights us, and we are not dead ;
Though bow'd, we lift aloft our head—
If but to higher fates defy ! ”

xx.

Thus he, with voice of sorrow strung,
Pour'd honey from the viper's tongue,
Whose mimic misery was such
That one could almost think the touch
Was true. And truth there was, I ween,
In some, for it is strangely seen,
And curiously—and sure he can,
Tho' villain, love much like a man !
And as no sound the stillness stirs,
He puzzled, standing, gapes, infers ;

And, drawing closer, whispers low
A word that sets her frame aglow,—
A word that makes her eyes expand,
And clench with hate her tiny hand :
He would her rapturous form embrace,
 And gently kneeleth by her side ;
But up there rose, as to deride
His passion, a cold, bloodless face,
With vacant, staring eyes—and then
It sank into repose again.
Back shrank he from the sight, as tho'
Beneath him yawn'd a gulf of woe,
And he the precipice had trod
In anger with mankind and God.
“ Tell me,” he cries, as passion now
Mantles in clouds upon his brow,
And he his coarser nature frees
From all restraints ; for she, he sees,
Cannot be won with words, and fate
Has given him power to love ! or hate !
“ Tell me that thou wilt love me, and
 Thy lover there shall live ; if not,
He never leaves alive this land,—
 He never leaves alive this spot !
Thou know'st yon precipice that towers
 High from the seething hell below ?
Him will I in its torrent throw :
Thou knowest man's revengeful powers ? ”

XXI.

Such were the words, in passion flung,
That through the bower terrific rung ;—
Such were the words that o'er her soul,
Like a great wave of anguish, roll ;—
Such were the words, in angry flood,
That blanched her cheek, that froze her blood.
Her starlike eyes, the wondering light,
Gleam'd like two meteors in the night,
And lit the bower whereby to trace,
Alas ! in vain, some pitying face ;
For each wild form that she survey'd,
No sign of hope or love betrayed ;
Each seem'd as though his brain had gone,
And he was left a mortal stone.
Nor can she seek Demina's face,
Nor gaze into a soul so base :—
And as her orbs stray to the ground,
She sees her hapless lover, bound ;—
And then the precipice uprears
Its horrid form, with thousand fears ;
The roaring surf beats loud below
In one undying, maddening woe ;
And Philip's beauteous form is torn
To pieces by the cruel storm.

She views it tossing on the sea,
Flung by the waves' infernal glee,
And dwelleth on the misery.
And she can save that life, that form,
From death so frightful—horrid storm !
She, with a word, hath power to give
Him freedom, life !—to die—to live !
To live for days which yet may be,
Though brightness now is clothed in dark ob-
scurity.

Canto the Second.

I.

On wings of dazzling gold the sun descends,
And to Heaven's vault a more than glory lends,
Bathes the far West with beauty's fairest sign
And floods the world with rays of light divine ;
Tips yonder mountain with a gleam of fire,
Presses soft clouds that in its beams expire,
Opens its golden gates to mortal view,
Expands a vista of ethereal blue !
And fancy, wild careering o'er the scene,
Floats through dominions of the All-supreme ;

Beholds the glad angelic hosts appear,
Whilst sounds symphonious fall upon the ear
In strains, that swelling through the rapturous
sky,
Upon the soul doth lie, like ravished melody.

II.

There is a cell in yonder tower
That opens to the ocean breeze ;
That clasps the chilly breath of seas,
And welcomes every winter shower.

* * * * *

Within that stony cell there lies
A soul who, sighing, views the skies'
Triumphant gleam, and He who made—
Each stroke diffuseth richer shade ;
And hears the birds on myriad wing
Their joy to their Creator sing ;
While from below, soft, wild, and lone,
The unweary sea its weary moan
Casts on the prisoner's silent ear,
In tones of resignation drear.
In heavy circle round his waist
A ponderous iron belt is placed,

Which, fasten'd strongly in the wall,
But giveth him small space to view
Freedom in ocean's charmèd blue,
And terror in its furious pall.

III.

Philip, when sense returned again,
Found himself fetter'd and alone ;
And, stretch'd full on the cold, damp stone,
Wounds ached, and pulses throbb'd with pain.
The wind blew in upon him now
With whistling noise and icy breath,—
Such as a corpse might breathe in death,—
A fearful chill upon his brow.
And he would rise, but lo ! the pain
Of wounds is great ; the massive chain
Hangs round him like a poisonous snake,
And horrid, rasping noises make
At every step o'er stony floor :—
Each sound seeins harsher than before.

IV.

And now, with mighty effort, he
Flings off the pain,—he feeleth free !
The scene unfolds,—rich misery !

Far as the human eye can view,
In one long stretch of heaving blue,
The mighty ocean trembling lies ;
While from its breast the white foam flies,
Like white clouds o'er the summer skies !
The emblem of the great, the free,—
And of that glorious liberty
Which ends but in eternity !
And as the dying sun declines
Deep, deeper still, the joyous winds
Come up, with sounds of happiness,
The cold bars of his cell to kiss,
And play around his heated brow,
And to his tortured heart in low
And yet fierce murmurs, whisper “Cease
Thy wild imaginings, and peace
Be on thee ; thou canst not explore
The wonders of that unknown shore !”

v.

He sees the ocean bounding, free,
And hears its dreary melody,
And views that golden orb the sun
Sink, now his daily task is done ;
And yonder, 'midst the blue of skies,
Beholds the silver moon arise

Modest as chastity, serene and pale,
While o'er her floats a virgin veil
Of snow-white cloud,—like some fair bride
That at the solemn altar's side
Wears o'er her face to hide the flush
And beauty of her maiden blush.
And with the fair moon's beauteous beams
His memory wakens to past scenes :
All that obscurely lay in night
Now o'er his soul, in hurried flight,
Dashes, with horrid force and light :
Demina, Zoe, Death, the bower,—
The dying shriek, the dastard's power,—
The more than mortal strength that ran
Through him, and made him more than man,—
The last wild, vain attempt to smite,
Ere his great strength had vanish'd quite,—
The bursting eyes, the throbbing brain,
The cold, thick blood in every vein,—
The congeal'd ice that bound the heart
Which knew, midst all, it was to part
From its bright star of glorious birth,
Its heavenly diadem on earth !
And then a dark and fearful swoon,
With phantoms flying through the gloom,
On wings of flame, with eyes of fire,
And each with fiercest hell's desire

Writ on its countenance ; and then,
Borne by these horrid shapes of men,
A pure white angel struggling lies,
And fills the gloom with piteous cries.
That voice, 'tis hers,—he hears, he sighs,
He struggles, falls, he cannot rise !
But what is yonder blackening form
That rears itself above the storm
Of cursèd spirits ? More it grows,
And round a deeper darkness throws ;
Then, bursting to a fierce death light,
Shows horribly the fearful sight.
Around the vast sepulchral flame
Shriek shapes too terrible to name,
Too frightful for the deepest hell,
Where direst spirits howling dwell.
Each screeching gulps the spectral fire,
 And then through body and through brain
 It cometh hissing forth again
In conflagration deep and dire.
But, see ! amid yon horrid blaze
A form ! Why does he gasp and gaze ?
'Tis she, his love ! The flames career
Around her ! Quick, quick ! death is near !
And, with tremendous effort, he
Raises himself—he doth not see,
Although his eyes be open wide,
The scorpion gliding from her side.

And then a silent darkness crept
O'er his sad spirit,—deep he slept ;
And woke to find this cell of stone
Tell him all hope of life had flown.

VI.

And doth she live ? Hath she beneath
This mass of ruin and of death
Escaped ? and how, and where,—oh ! where ?
He cries aloud in his despair.
And then his thoughts, with deepest pain,
Dwell on his loved one ; but in vain
He asks the stars to tell him she
Still lives, still breathes, and misery
Stamps on his face remorse, pain, fear,
Nor soothes her harshness with one tear.
She lives, she lives ! else on the wing
Of Heaven, her sweet soul wandering,
Would be allow'd by her great God,
To visit him in his abode ;
For there is love on earth that springs
Bright, pure, and beautiful,—that wings
The soul in rapture's chariot gay
Upon the pale moon's glittering ray ;
And rises in the ether far,
Like some superb and glorious star.

And, gazing on the listless sea,
He murmurs forth his burning words ;
And but the glad farewell of birds
Breaks on him with impassion'd glee.
He raves, and shouts, and tries in vain
To loose or snap his ponderous chain ;
Then, with a great, great sob, his head
Sinks on his breast, his rage is fled ;
He tottering falls, his brain is light,
He swoons, and all again is night.

VII.

When sweet morn, blushing, half-undress'd
Cometh, he wakens from his rest
With thoughts of gloomiest shape and size,
And deepest dread in deep-blue eyes.
Far from the limits of his room
His sad soul wanders, through the gloom
Of darken'd fancy. Deep he sees,
Beyond the purple depths of seas ;
And e'en his soul, with madden'd glee,
Soars through realms of eternity.
But now his eyes are fixed upon
His window sill, where, blushing, lies
A rose, as perfect as the skies
E'er spread their mantle over ; shone

The sun's new rays upon its bloom,
And dewdrops glisten'd in the sun,
And zephyrs wafted their perfume
To him, as they before had done.
And, springing quickly forward, he
Clasps, kisses it with ecstasy.
Once more he feels that there is life
On earth, and beauty,—and that strife
Is by a providential hand
Twined round our beings, to expand
Our souls to higher sense of bliss,
To find a heaven in happiness.
And this sweet thing hath life imbued
Within his gloomy solitude.
Could spirits of celestial heights
Descend to earth, from dazzling flights,
To pluck our modest flowers that blow
Their sweetness o'er a world of woe ?
Or can yon bird, with downy breast,
That shooteth swiftly through the air,
Have borne it from some valley fair
To sweeten and make warm its nest ?
“Oh, thou perfection of thy kind,
In thee we see ourselves refined,
And view the weakness of mankind.
All that is bright and fair to-day
To-morrow fades and dies away ;

And Nature stooping, as she must,
 Trails her bright pinions in the dust.
 And so the blush upon thy face
 Must pass, nor leave one lovely trace ;
 Thy petals into earth's dull shade
 Must sink and into nothing fade ;
 And thou must die, the world must fall,
 And gloomy night envelop all.
 And yet, O Goddess, why so soon
 Art thou deprived of thy perfume,
 Thy life, thy loveliness, thy flush ?
 Oh, how can Nature let thee blush
 And wither in her grasp ; oh, why
 Are things delicious ever doom'd to die ? ”

VIII.

And so Despair on Darkness' hated wind
 Spreads o'er his soul and fills with gloom his mind ;
 And still, where'er his tired eye can trace,
 Hope's brightest beams are hid 'neath Horror's
 face.
 All is so silent, ceased is ocean's moan,
 And Terror shrinks from being thus alone ;
 And unseen spirits seem to breathe the breath
 On him of pestilential wrath and death.

E'en ocean seemed as though creation sank
Deep in its breast, and all the world was blank :
Silence and Darkness reign'd, as on that day
When worlds shall vanish, kingdoms melt away.

IX.

"O Thou, who hear'st the wretched cry,
When pain assails the troubled breast,
Vouchsafe on me to turn Thine eye,
And give this aching spirit rest !
Yon bird that warbles in the air,
If bound with fetters could not sing ;
It must a life of freedom share,
And mount the zephyr on its wing.
E'en those great clouds that in the sky
Hurl back the fierce sun's withering ray,
So powerful now, so soon will die :
And I am humbler far than they !
Yon sun, that shines so brightly now,
Anon will sink, and pale, and fade.
And o'er the splendour of its brow
Night's gloomy darkness shall pervade.
Oh, Fame and Greatness, what are ye ?
Things in a vision seen ?
But I have dream'd what I might be,—
Gazed deep into futurity,—
Yet could do naught but dream.

I, too, have stood upon the banks of life,
And watch'd humanity float madly by ;
I, too, have battled with a world of strife
When glory threw its shadow on mine eye !
And bright imagination to the sky
Bore me, on wings of hope, now leaves me here
to die.
To die, to rot ! Ah, God, bring death
Ere, mad, I rob myself of breath !
Forgive, my pulses burn,—I rave,
I would not rashly seek the grave,—
For Thou hast form'd my life, my fate,
And Thou hast made, and Thou must take.
Oh, that my soul could on the wing
Of light celestial mount the sky,
Where seraphim sublimely sing,
And heavenly chords of music sigh.
Gleam, gleam, great Sun,—and oh, ye Winds !
Sing to the glorious giant's flame,
And carol forth your Maker's name,
So that it melody refines.
Invisible, speed on, speed on,
And charm creation with your song !
Swell, swell,—oh, God, that only I
Were placed upon Thy bosom free,
And bounding for eternity,
Through azure of eternal sky ! ”

X.

Thus soft, despairing accents fell
From youthful lips, and all the cell
Resounded with the words of woe ;
For Time with heavy feet and slow
Crept on, and months had pass'd away,
Nor on his head one beauteous ray
Of hope or liberty had shone—
All brightness from his life had gone !
The ocean seemed to smile the same,
The sunbeam sparkled on the main,
The wind with the same sweetness blew,
The sea-gulls more advent'rous grew ;
And in the sky the golden sun
Did his proud course of glory run ;
All Nature glow'd so bright that he
Felt keener, grief's intensity.
It seem'd as though high Heaven had sent
These things to swell his discontent.
With one long gaze into the sky,
He heaves to Heaven a long, long sigh—
The tear stands in his quivering eye.
No word—but on his tortured face
Hath agony a fearful trace
Impress'd ; and, although despair
Hath mark'd his features everywhere,
There is a something godlike there.

XI.

A sail now falls upon his eye,
He springs up fast, he knows not why ;
Nor can he tell why at his heart
His life-strings pull, as though they'd part ;
Nor can he tell why o'er his mind
Joy rushes, with confusion blind.

A sail, a little sail, no more,
A boat whose bow points to the shore,—
So small a thing, that from his height
'Tis almost like a bird in flight.

And as a bird its snow-white wing
Propels it with the gentle breeze,
And o'er the azure-tinted seas
It bounds, with freedom in its spring.

Oh, Liberty ! thou art a god
Whom only those in bondage know
The sweetness of ; thou art the rod
Through which our Maker's blessings flow !
Thou art the angel of the earth :
A holy dowry to us given
By the Almighty,—through thy birth
The mortal tastes a sweet of Heaven.

XII.

Philip to wonderment resigns
Himself !—the boat's white canvas shines
With double splendour as she sways
Beneath the bright sun's glistening rays.
Now on the water blue she glides,
Now almost on the zephyr rides,
And now her prow is lifted high,
And now sinks in the waves. The sky,
The water,—aye, and e'en the rocks,—
Seem to grow brighter as she nears ;
The sea-gull now no longer mocks
Him with its cry, as though it fears
To break the fascinating scene
With its harsh shriek or giddy flight,
Or in its winging go between
The prisoner and his vision bright.

XIII.

And now the boat is near. Ah, yes,
It is his Zoe ; but the dress
She wears is that of man. He knows
Most well 'tis she ; her presence throws
A thrilling glow through all his veins
Of joy and love—ethereal pains.

He shouts to her with rapturous voice,
And clasps his chains with ecstasy,
And bids the sighing winds rejoice,
And sing of love and liberty.
In that wild moment through his brain
A world of burning thoughts would fain
Assert their powers. And now his eyes
View something in his Zoe's hand,
And lo, two dazzling wings expand
Themselves, and upward flies
A snow-white bird of beauty rare,
Which to his charmèd orbs appear'd
The liberator of his care,—
A seraph of some purer air !
And as it to his prison near'd,
It stopp'd, and, in the mid-air swinging,
Pour'd forth from its melodious tongue
A song that set the heavens a-ringning,
And from the sea a great moan wrung.
E'en winds stopp'd their soft, sighing sound
While this sweet strain sublimely floats
Through scented air ; the birds around
Perch trembling at the wondrous notes.
And Philip, with delighted eyes,
Views almost with insane surprise
This vision, which before his eyes
Floats godlike in the summer skies—

Is—yes, a bird of promise, given
To man, that it might tell him God
Would rule the world by love,—the rod
Is of the earth, and not of heaven !
Ne'er did the patriarch with more joy
Behold his dove return with leaf
Of olive, and with tidings brief
That God would save and not destroy,
Than Philip ; and glow'd sweet his soul,
As he beheld this beauteous dove,
This glorious messenger of love,
This emblem of the perfect whole.
With keen imagination strung,
And blessings on his faltering tongue,
He views this bird ; and, viewing, dreams
Once more that love and life are his,—
That Liberty implants a kiss
Upon his brow ; and all now seemis
As though bright stars of realms above
Had from their spheres come down to earth,
And with their beams a second birth
Had come, and all the world was love.

XIV.

The boat, that on the waters swung
While yet the bird its carol sung,

Now turns, and with a hurrying spring
Bounds lightly off upon its wing ;
Until it seems to sink to rest
Within the ocean's mighty breast.
The bird is flown, and once again
Grim silent solitude doth reign.
And now his agonising gaze
Appeals the ocean. Oh, how blank
It seems to him since in it sank
His hopes ! No murmuring sound betrays
That e'en his very soul is dead ;
Mute, mute his voice, his eyes alone
Look for that something which has fled,—
That something which from him is gone.
He sinks down with despair at heart,—
Quiet despair more dreadful than
The ravings of a maniac man,
Whose madness is the cruel smart
That urges him to action. This despair
Bursts o'er the soul, that longs to swell
With rapture, its foul dregs of hell,
And Misery sits upon the throne of Care.
He, like Prometheus, at the rock
Dies, dies, and yet lives on ! The shock
Laid him inanimate. When through the sky
Love, Hope, and Fear together fly,
What can a mortal do but die ?

XV.

As some poor shipwreck'd mariner on the seas
Beholds, careering with the rising breeze,
A tiny speck on the horizon bright,
Which glistens proudly in the streaming light,
Till from the sea, before his dazzled eyes,
With thrilling joy, he sees a vessel rise ;
And as with stately steps she stalks the main,
Consummate bliss o'er harsh despair doth reign.
Nearer she comes, his limbs forget to freeze,
And he's no longer shipwreck'd on the seas ;
Contentment sits upon his haggard face,
And joy ethereal lightens up the waste.
Ah, God, they see him not !—Away she goes,
And from her bows the seething water throws,
And, lurching over on her massy side,
With force impetuous o'er the waters glide.
The liquid waves in circles round her curl,
And 'gainst her form their little furies hurl ;
The wind arises, catches full each sail,
Onward she swings, and glories in the gale ;
Faster she seems to fly, her canvas white
Is quickly moving from the gazer's sight,
Till, mingling with the water and the sky,
No scrap remains to fascinate the eye.

Oh, what can illustrate the thoughts that rise ;
Or pierce the looks intended for the skies ?
What wild imaginings can be express'd
To represent the feelings of that breast ?
Describe the path his fainting mind hath trod,
And tell us what he only meant for God ?

XVI.

“ Philip !”—comes sweet and low, the name
He hears, he trembles, and his frame
With more than earthly influence glows ;
His blood with awful langour flows.
He lifts not up his throbbing head,
To view the angel of the dead ;
For but an angel here could come,
And death but seek such dreary home.
The thrilling sound hung in the air,
As though a spirit touch'd the fair
And golden harp of Heaven, and smote.—
And all created worlds shook at the awful note.
“ Philip !” Again ! list, list ! Is 't not more like
The sound of human voice than airy sprite ?
A voice to some sweet-favour'd mortal given,
A voice that breathes the melody of heaven ?
He turns his head and lifts his languid eyes,
Straight to his arms his beauteous Zoe flies !

Wild beats the heart to heart, the breast to
breast,
Joy wafts them through dominions of the blest.
'Midst the fond raptures of their sweet embrace
All is forgotten, and upon each face
Joy and excitement sweetest rays do shine,
And each of beauty is ethereal and divine.

xvii.

And now the first sweet bliss is o'er,
And both their several fates deplore ;
And 'midst sob, sigh, and soft caress,
Escape short tales of their distress ;
While on the window perch the birds,
Listening unto the rapturous words.
She tells him of the time that's fled
Since first he stricken fell as dead ;
How she unto a living tomb
Consented, to avert his doom,
And how the watchful eye of fate
Had guarded her from vicious hate.
“ Demina sought my hand ; I gave
A promise : love, it was to save
Thee from his cruel wrath, for he
Had doom'd thee to the secret sea !

Oh, Heaven forgive me, if I err'd,
Or that to thee my faithless word
Ascended. I, assenting, spoke,
But ere I did the vow was broke.
I lived to think that yet the light
Might break upon our world of night—
That we, though conquered, yet might be
Victorious in futurity !
And then he came,—oh, horrid bliss !—
And sealed my false vow with a kiss.
His lips were cold, cold as the dead
That rise from dark pool's slimy bed ;
He press'd them to my heated brow
(I almost feel the brand there now) ;
The morrow came, I asked for thee,
He told me, love, that thou wert free,—
That ere the morning sun had shone
Bright from the sky that thou hadst gone ;
And when he spoke of love and me,
Thou answer'd him thus tauntingly :
' Tell her that Virtue guards her well,
Else had she lived for me and hell !'
Ye heavenly powers, could I believe
That thou wouldest thus thy love deceive ?
No, no ! And in my madden'd haste
I call'd him liar to his face !
Paler and paler grew his cheek,
Trembling he moved, he could not speak.

Gleamed his fierce eyes a horrid light
That would a radiant angel fright ;
And then, advancing slowly, he
Whisper'd, with dreadful secrecy :
'Thy lover, love, is bravely flown,
Now live for love and me alone.'
Such proofs he gave me of thy guilt,
That oft the dagger's curling hilt
I desperate grasp'd ; but when I saw
Death pass me with majestic awe,
My aching heart beat loud—I knew
That *he* was false, that thou wert true.
Question me not of him, nor ask
How I have lived, these months have pass'd ;
My brow alone his touch hath known—
God, it was only stone to stone !

XVIII.

" Huge, bearded Marcus, who of late
Hath strictly kept the central gate,
Years gone, amid our ranks did join,
And fought beneath our proud ensign.
Him once my sire's arm did save
From death, too horrid for the grave !
And ever since that fateful day
He vow'd he would the debt repay.

He told me that, in drunken hour,
The guard who watches o'er this tower
Had said, that in his airy cell
The blue-eyed stranger, bound, did dwell,
And that they made his life a hell.
This he confided straight to me,
And own'd his will to succour thee.
The boat was but thy soul to cheer,
To tell thee, love, that help was near.
But,—Heaven forgive me!—I have come
To bear thee from this dreary home.
Quick, quick! Let us begone—away,
Ere break the first grey streaks of day.
The guard is drugg'd, and all is clear :
Thy chains—oh, Heaven!—here, Marcus, here!
Now let thy strength on rivets fall,
And quick, else death awaits us all!"
Fast fly the strokes, and soon the chain
Falls to the ground and with it pain.
And now, with silent steps, the train
Quit the dim cell, and bolt again
The massive door ; restore with ease
Unto the warder's belt the keys ;
And then they fly from door to door,
Through gloomy room and corridor ;—
Now in the deep, dark shadows hide,
Now o'er a sleeping ruffian glide ;

Once only were they stopp'd, and then
The soldier sank, nor rose again ;
For, quick as fate, a dagger press'd
The beating heart within his breast,
And the only sound of that deadly rout
Was the crimson blood as it gurgled out.

XIX.

And now the pond'rous doors are passed ;
The courtyard they have reach'd at last.
High up upon the frowning wall
They see the arm'd sentinel
Walking his beat, with measured pace,
With downcast and averted face.
Mix'd with the shadows of the wall,
They slowly to the gateway crawl.
Arrived, they stand ; one moment more
They will be safe, all will be o'er !
O God, they do invoke Thy aid,
They tremble, yet are not afraid.
And now the key within the lock
Is turned, the massive bolt is shot
Back in its socket, but it sprang
With force, and all the courtyard rang.
The sent'nel heard, and from his height
Stood straining for some sound or sight.

Still, still they keep ; and then, "Who's there?"
Came the sharp summons on the air.
No answer ! Still again, "Who's there?"
But only echo fill'd the air.
Now troubled fear his breast inspires,
He for relief his weapon fires.
The men come rushing from repose,
And fill the air with angry oaths.

XX.

Meanwhile, at the first dire alarm,
Huge Marcus on his powerful arm
Flings Zoe, and aloud he cries :
"Thank God for yonder blackening skies!"
Then unto Philip, "Follow me!"
He cried, and bounded for the sea.
Straight in his tracks our hero fled,
Though madly on the soldier sped !
The weakness of his limbs had gone,
As now he bounded on, and on ;
Excitement drove dull pain away,
And all his powers his will obey.
Close come hoarse yells upon their ears,
And fill them with a thousand fears.
Forward they speed—if once at bay,
The bloodhounds round, what hope have they ?

"On, on," cries Marcus, and with bound
Of deer he springeth o'er the ground ;
Our hero to the call replies,
With force of all his energies,
Whilst shouts and hideous oaths ascend the
dark'ning skies.

XXI.

And now with panting breasts they reach
The sea, and tread the pebbled beach ;
Their boat made fast by lengthened rope,
Doth on the heaving waters float,
Struggling in vain itself to free,
And mingle with the rising sea.
Beneath the power of Marcus' hand,
'Tis quickly drawn upon the sand.
"Now haste ye, sir, and lady fair,
A moment we have not to spare ;
The howling of the wolves draws near,
But trust in Heaven, and have no fear !"
They stepp'd aboard, but ere he could
Push off the boat upon the flood,
An arm upon his shoulder falls,
And voice excited fiercely calls
Him to surrender. It was one
Who by his swiftness had outrun

The mass, whose figures now were seen
Lit for a moment by a gleam
Of lightning. Quick as the light
That show'd the scene begins the fight.
No time for science, one must die,
And each must kill his enemy.
And naught is heard except the breath
Of combatants for life and death,
And 'tis to stop that breath they fight ;—
Oh, awful is the silent sight !
No word is spoken, but the eye
Gleams the fierce sentence,—“Thou shalt die!”
And each upon the other glares,
And each the same expression wears.
But now the shout of foes comes near
And nearer, till upon the ear
The accents harshly fall and clear.
Then swell'd the sinews, while the hue
And cry of wild wolves louder grew :
Sway'd their two forms like kingly trees
That bend beneath a mighty breeze ;
While but the gasps for breath assail
The bosom of the rising gale.
Then Marcus high above his head
Lifted his foe, whose strength had sped,
And with a wondrous effort he
Hurleth him howling in the sea,

Pushes the boat into the deeps,
And in it swift and safely leaps.

XXII.

The boat had scarce swung from the land
When the pursuers swarm'd the strand;
They saw its tall and spectral form
Shoot in the darkness and the storm;
A strong breeze rush'd from off the shore,
With it 'tis gone—'twas seen no more.
For hours Demina's ruffian crew
Explore the wild and stormy blue;
Each little bay and hiding-place
In vain they search, in vain they trace.
He deems not that they'll leave the bay,
And tempt the wild and dangerous sea,
For on such stormy night as this
No boat with hope the waves could kiss.

XXIII.

Meanwhile, the wild and heaving wave
The fugitives with boldness brave,
Steer their small skiff to open sea,
And leave behind the stormy bay.
Before the billows high they ran,
And thought them safer far than man;

For there's a Power that rules the sea,
And destiny is destiny !
Firm at the helm brave Marcus stands,
And grasps it strongly with his hands,
Laughs as his boat the tempest braves,
And guides it safely o'er the waves.
And Zoe is to Philip's breast
With fondest rapture madly press'd :
They list not to the raging storm,
Nor dream of fear, of death, of harm :
Each in the other's being lives,
Each life unto the other gives :
And smiling on them from afar,
Through gloom, there shineth still—a star.



THE VESTAL.

IF ever you should go to Rome, and stray
Among the ruins of the Capitol
Or Colosseum,—where barbaric sons
Sat in Vespasian's amphitheatre,
And cheer'd the gladiators' combat, or
Gloated o'er mis'ry of the Christian martyrs,—
Your thoughts will wander back, and you will
stand
With twice nine hundred years upon your head,
And view the scenes that were. And there will
steal
Upon your soul sensations that are sweet,
Though great and terrible the deeds that make
These soft sensations come ; but they are pass'd,
And e'en their very shadows grow so dim,
That children stare i' the dark, nor feel afraid.
First Romulus, the she-wolf's rugged son,
The founder of the mighty city that
Was yet to shake the world ; then the Sabines,
Whom the fierce, sensual few so rudely claim'd.
And so the mind treads down from scene to
scene.

And then comes Nero, he who sat on tower
And laugh'd at burning Rome ; Caligula,
The monster whose great wish
Was that his countrymen had but one head,
So with a single blow he could destroy.
The terror of the earth ; the tyrant who
Made a great beast a god, and people knelt
And worshipp'd a dumb brute. These scenes,
And countless others,—for Rome's history
Glows with the many colours of the bow
That spans yon azure arch,—will rise before
The fond imagination, as it dwells
On the strange life of the Eternal City.
But don't forget to watch well Priscus' reign,
For 'tis of that epoch that I would sing.

The sacred temple to the goddess rose,
Vesta, the daughter of old Saturn, and
The virgin deity of every hearth.
Her priestesses were maidens, ta'en when young,
Long, long ere they had sense to comprehend
The awfulness of the great step they took.
And they were sworn to serve for years and years,
And keep the sacred fire burning, else
A dire and fierce calamity would befall
The city. Nor could they marry till the end
Of their long term was served. They also swore,

On pain of death, oaths of virginity.
All that a woman most desires was shut
Out from their lives—no love was there for them.
Hearts must be steel'd; and woe betide the
youth
Who cast soft glances or insulted them,
For were they not the fav'rites of the State—
The people's angels and the city's friends ?
But, ah ! can mortal force the rolling sea
Back from its course ? No, no. Or can he
stay
The thunderbolt that skims the dull, dark cloud ?
Or hold its baleful light that dies away ?
Then how can he command the wingèd boy,
Who floateth o'er young souls like a sweet dream,
To stay when he desires ? Ah, no !—ah, no !
Oh, mortal, thou art great, but thou art human !
There is a Being somewhere who divides
The night from day, and makes the moon and
stars
Glisten their measured time, then sink ; and, lo !
Uprises from the world's vast grave, as 'twere,
Another greater and sublimer light. Ye may
pierce
Heaven's larger planets from your dull, cold
earth,
And fancy that ye read what's written there :

Like and unlike those Scriptural mortals who
Raised towards Heaven the fabled Babel tower,
To conquer—what?—the stars!

She was a priestess, eighteen years of age,
An age that is delicious, for 'tis when
The girl is woman, and the woman girl,—
Like two fair drops of dew that meet upon
The petal of a flower. And she was fair
And beautiful as yon great evening star ;
Soft as the dying murmur of a soul,
Sweet as the tender whisper of a sigh
That floateth on the ray of love's bright beam ;
Angelic as an angel, with two eyes
That almost seem'd a part of the blue sky
That bent above her. And her beauteous hair
Swept like a golden whirlwind round her form,
And cased her with a robe of dazzling beams.*
And he was handsome, with a pale, dark face,
And raven ringlets, that hung round his neck,
Reposed upon his shoulders ; and his eye
Was dark and bright, with a defiant look ;
And he was manly, and she loved him much.
Each night he scaled the temple's sacred walls,

* "Their hair was cut off probably at the period of their consecration ; whether this was repeated from time to time does not appear."—Smith's "*Greek and Roman Antiquities*."

And met her 'midst the flowers ; and they would sit

Together on the fragrant beds, and press
Their hands within each other, murmur low,
Dear passionate words into each other's ears,
And press soft lips to lips. And their young souls
Would fly together from the earthly scenes
Upon the moonbeams ; and amongst the stars
They'd wander sweetly, and forget the earth,
And that their passion was a crime, and death
Would be their portion.- And they loved ; and love
Is like the soft inflection of a note
That some fair angel in his wandering flight
Flings on the air—incomprehensible
As is the face of the Almighty God.

Night after night upon the verdant sward
Had he breathed in her ear his burning love ;
And she was happy, and she gave to him
All that a woman can. Resolved to flee
Away from the dull temple,—they arranged
All for the following even ; but that night
It chancèd the chief priestess came abroad,
And, walking in the most deserted spot
Of the huge garden, finds herself, anon,
Gazing upon the lovers, who reclined
Lock'd in each other's arms. She stole away,

Nor had they heard her, they were so engross'd.
Soon she return'd with aid, and both were bound,
And put upon their trial. It was short !
Death, death !—it was the law, and it must be.
But it was horrible; the sentence ran
With a strange humour which was grim as hell :—
Since they so loved each other's company,
In the one tomb they should be placed alive !
And they were forced to march through thronged
streets,
And bear the insults of rude populace ;
Be spat upon, and jeer'd, and laugh'd, and cursed,
Lock'd in each other's arms,—so they were bound.
It was a cruel and heartrending sight.
And her fair shoulders were stripp'd bare, and all
Her beauteous bosom was exposed to view ;
And it was bleeding, and the tender flesh
Was torn in many parts. Her streaming hair
Had been shorn off, or else she could have hid
Her face and bosom in 't Her eyes were closed,
But e'en in darkness the atrocious gaze
Of enraged thousands glared with greater force
For strong imagination drew the scene.
And he bore up, and cast defiant looks
Upon the howling multitude, and glared
Into the eyes of those who spat on him ;
But he was bound, and could do nothing more.

Arrive they at the tomb, the workmen yet
Have scarcely finish'd, and they wait until
All shall be ready. It was sunk i' the earth,
And in resemblance was a huge round hole.
Down into it reach'd several rough-hewn steps,
To make the descent easy—thoughtful world !
At last the work is finish'd, and the men,
Begrimed with sweat and dirt, come scrambling up,
And the grim priestesses and priests again
Chant forth a melancholy dirge, which makes
Even the soul of the harsh Roman quail.
And the fair, loving, doom'd ones are led down—
Down in the earth, down to their living grave,
Two biscuits and two jugs of water are
Laid there beside them ; they must live on it,
And when 'tis gone, droop, wither, and decay.
And a huge stone is placed upon the mouth
Of their chill tomb, and shuts out light and air ;
So all communion with the upper world
Is gone, and they are left to die.

And long, long after, when they raised the lid
Off from the lovers' tomb, and entered it,
Nothing was left of passion, life, or love,
But ghastly bones ; and they were all entwined
Amongst each other, as though death had smote
'hem suddenly while in dear love's embrace.

And when they touch'd those bones with careless
hand,
The mass collapsed, and of two skeletons
There only was a heap of ashes left.



HERO.

THERE is a wondrous silence in the air,
As though the vast arch of the still sky
Doth hold its mighty breath, like mortals, who
Suppress their breathing in a sick man's room
In nameless terror, but emerging they
Gasp fierce and violent. The sun goes down
With bright, though mystic radiance, and a frown
Gloriously strange spreads o'er the western sky,
And dims the beauty of its majesty.
There's not a murmur in the still, calm air ;
There's not a ripple on the quiet wave !
On yonder rocks that overhang the sea
The birds perch mute, and with unquiet eyes
Stare o'er the placid liquid, where the ships
With loosened canvas lie upon the stream.

The sun is gone, and all the world is changed !
The mighty winds have broke their stifling bounds,
And, maddened by their strange confinement, they
Rush fierce and furiously the waters o'er.
Behold the face of radiant heaven is black,



As though the spirits of the dead arose
And waved sepulchral shadows on the air.
The sea now broken roars in angry fear
And wakes the seabirds from timid sleep,
Who, wildly shrieking, launch themselves in space,
And rush in frenzy 'gainst the jagged steeps,
And wounded fall into the seething flood.

Mark yonder tower that uplifts itself
Above the waves—'mid aerial elements !
Yon pile is dedicated to that one
Who gained the apple from the shepherd lad
Upon the Mount of Ida : priestesses
Here daily worship at her shrine, and throngs
Of pleasure-loving peaceful citizens
Twine wreaths of rose and myrtle round her throne,
And chant a happy melody to Love.
Blood stains not those pure altars, but soft smiles,
Mixed with delicious sighs, for ever steal
And cling around the place. The atmosphere
Contains an essence that enwraps the soul,
And drives it to a frenzy : such as one
Who hides his face upon his lover's breast,
And 'neath the sweetly perfumed lace doth feel
The beating of a heart, and knows it beats
In answer to his own ; aye, such an air
Fills this divine abode ; and mortals feel

Its power, nor wish to conquer, but succumb
To such ethereal torture.

But what light
Is yon that glimmers deadly in the storm
From airy tower? and that form—what means
The strangeness of this scene? The night is dark,
The sea roars, and ethereal elements
Hold fiercest combat in the chill mid air.
Below, the waters on the jagged rocks
Roar with their tongues of thunder, and a wail
Like some lost spirit hurled from brightest heaven
Is carried off upon the furious breast
Of the mad tempest. But with stern, white face,
She standeth boldly, and her torch's flame
Sways to and fro : she strains her orbs and ears
For human sight or sound. The Hellespont
Shrieks harsh to her outcries, and fearful thoughts
Beset her. Then her mem'ry hastens back
To those sweet nights when her bright torch was guide
To light him as he swam ; and they did meet
And cling unto each other, and the kiss,
The soft, sweet kiss, dispelled anxiety,
And their young souls with a delicious bound
Did soar away in heaven : those nights
When the fair budding moon looked down and smil'd,
And the dear waters seemed to part their crests

At glance from him, as though he were a god.
 Upon those nights her radiant mistress watched
 Affections deep and lasting, and her soul
 Would plunge in fancy through excess of love.
 And he hath promised her this night shall see
 Him in her arms, if he but breathe life's breath.
 And well she knows him, and tho' stormy winds
 Howl e'er so fiercely, she unto the tower
 Wendeth her way, and lighteth her bright torch
 To guide him o'er the waters.

“Mistress, hear !

If thou'rt indeed the goddess of sweet love,
 Look down upon thy child, thy follower ?
 Oh ! let him not tempt yonder treacherous deep
 On such a night as this ; or should he now
 Battle amid its waves, oh, give him strength
 To cope through all bold and successfully !
 Oh, thou canst feel, for thou hast felt this love,
 And thou wilt hear for thou thyself hast loved !
 Save him, if but to reach these arms once more
 And we will die together !”

As she spoke,

She strained her eyes across the sombre deep,
 And set her blanched lips hard ; there only came
 The echo of her words back on the air,

"Together—die together," and her soul
Stung like a guilty conscience, and her blood
Froze fast within her veins.

The lightning played
Over the blacken'd liquid, and illum'd
The horrid surface of the angry tide :
Such as the spectral light of Hell's vast shades
Sepulchral shows the woes of Stygian lake !
Panting she stands, nor ever turns aside,
But with a fixèd and unflinching gaze
Stares in the angry darkness, and she sees
Within her mind a thousand fearful sights,
And he is chiefest sufferer of them all.

But now she starteth, and a sudden glow
Of hurried life sweeps through her beauteous form.
A vast and wondrous sheet of lightning lit
The raging billows for a moment, but
That moment was enough : she saw
And died upon the sight. Among the waves
A youth was struggling, and his pale, white face
Bore a great anguish, and he beat the foam
That whirled around him with a tired hand
And great despair at heart : and a huge sea
Rose o'er him like a mountain ; and tho' fate

Had seized him now, his eyes were fixed upon
That beacon, and he sank, and smiling died.

She marked him, and an agonising shriek
Burst o'er the troubled waters, and her arms
Were flung in supplication to the skies.
Then staring down into the seething deep
She seem'd to fix her eyes upon the place
Where he that moment sank ; and then aloud,
“ Oh, love, I come, I come ! ” and with those words
She sprang through angry air.

The noisy wind
Ceas'd for a moment, and the harrowing wail
Tremblingly floated through the air, “ I come ! ”

The storm is gone, and all the world is changed,
And many a tempest wild has madly rush'd
Over the surface of the Hellespont
Since that sad night, when Life killed Love,
But Death united it again : and many a tear
Has fallen, and will fall, for her and him.
But when the angry elements let loose
Their fiercest wrath, and the whole watery plain
Is shaken to a fury, they have said
That on the coast of Sestos you may hear
At intervals—when winds forget to roar—
A low cry like a wail, “ I come, I come ! ”

ACTÆON.

FAIR as the fairest of sweet womankind,
Fair as the radiance of a shooting star,
Fair as the first soft blush of modesty
Was the young morn. The beaming sun
Yet scarce awake, glow'd with delicious hues,
And, casting gilded shadows on the sward,
Made the earth tremble with a sweet emotion.
The delicate azure of the bending sky
Was pure as angel's orb ; the scented wind
Seem'd to hang in the golden atmosphere
As though it could not, would not hurry by.
All Nature so combined to give life love,
That not a God-created thing seemed still,—
All stirr'd and trembled with a beauteous move-
ment.

Earth seemed to catch its glory from the sky,—
Such as love springs from love, and hearts from
hearts
Steal the bright glow that softens fiercest earth
And tremulous roll o'er the excited soul.
High in the air the feathered warblers sang,
And every leaf on every tree that sway'd

Flung its soft notes upon the fragrant air,
Which, congregating in harmonious mass,
Burst 'midst the rosy sunbeams ; and the sky
Resounds with strains, great, wondrous ; and the
earth
Is link'd with chains of melody to Heaven.

"Twas on such a morning that the mighty Actæon
Call'd forth his hounds, and to the forest fresh
Sallied, to chase the wild boar or fair stag.
The greatest hunter of antiquity—
The Nimrod of his world—the keenest one
That e'er drew bow, pursued the antelope.
Forth went he, and his heart was glad within,
For 'twas a day that e'en the gods enjoy—
One fairer could they not command in Heaven.
As through the wood he trampled, brighter
beam'd
The sun, though temper'd with angelic breath.
And he felt happier and light of heart,
And joyously he caroll'd amorous lays
Anacreontic in their beauteousness.
But, lo ! i' the pauses of his thrilling song
He hears a peal of laughter, and the splash
Of waters, and he knows not what it means !
Thick grows the wood around. Again he hears
Peal after peal of soft and rippling laughter

And voices as of women ; and his soul
Bounds with delicious raptures ; and he makes
His way, with stealth, through the dense shrubbery.
He sudden stops, and turning round, retreats,
And looks again, and then again advances,
And gloats with fierce sensations on the scene
That now unfolds unto his amorous gaze.

Before him lay a fair and shining pool
Of dancing water ; on its banks he knelt,
And, leaning forward 'mid the blossomed leaves,
Gazed on the wondrous scene. 'Twas if he had
Found that famed river in fair Lydia,
Pactolus, with its streams of running gold ;
For brightly shone the banks of this fair pool
As with a lustrous rad'ance. 'Tis not that
Which makes his heart beat and his wild eye flash,
And hot blood course electric through his veins :
For he beholds a sight that e'en the gods
Dared not descend to gaze upon. The pool,
Of shallow depth and brilliant clearness, was
Full of fair, sportive nymphs, whose nakedness
Shone in the sunbeams like great orient pearls
Floating on liquid gold. It was the hour
When Artemis and her attendants rose
From virgin couches, and unto the pool
Wended, their bath to take.

Ah, curiosity !

Oft, oft indeed, thou pay'st a mighty debt !
For, leaning forward, eager to devour
The sight, the tender branches that he held
Gave way beneath his weight, and he was cast
Into the waters at Diana's feet.

With sudden shriek the startled nymphs gazed
round,

And on beholding the intruder, hid
As best they could their naked loveliness.
But she, the mistress of this beauteous band,
Marked with a radiant, stern, unswerving eye
The groveller at her feet ; and, though the blood
Mounted to her sweet face, and her heart sank,
Yet she preserved a stately presence, and
Surveyed him with a fierce and quiet scorn.
“Mortal, it is not meet that thou shouldst gaze
Upon divinity, and then go free.”
And, casting her blue eyes to the blue heaven,
She heaved a prayer ; and, lo ! immediately
A stag stands trembling where the hunter stood.

And now the yelp of hounds assails their ears,
And each significantly looked at each,
And reads the other's thoughts ; and then appears,
The foremost dog, and, yelping with delight,
He springs upon the stag, who until now

Ne'er movèd. But no sooner the fell claws
Of mad, infuriate monster touch his skin
Than swift he boundeth and is lost to sight
Among the bushes ; but the hungry hounds,
Now maddened with the scent, go rushing on,
And fill the soft air with their clam'rous cries.

On went the stag, and on the baying hounds,
Whose hoarse yelps, drawing near and nearer,
make

A sound ferocious ; and the frighten'd stag,
With its fine nerves strung to a high despair,
Bounds madly on. But, ah ! perceptibly,
The dogs draw near it, and it feels those nerves
Grow sudden dull, its strength departs, and, lo !
It standeth quivering, and up-rolls its eyes
With pity to the heavens : a long, low cry,—
Such as a soul would give in utmost pain,—
Escapes it, the next moment 'tis no more.



ENDYMION.

HE slumber'd, and the chill winds held their breath,
And the fair stars came out, and one by one
They kiss'd the mountain; and his youthful brow
Shone heavenly 'neath their soft, transcendent beams.
And, lo! behold the virgin, the cold Moon,
The glimmering goddess of sweet purity,
The soft, warm thing, shrouded with cloak of snow,
The emblem of eternal chastity.
Mark how she falters in her heavenly course,
And strains her orbs to concentrated view,
And gazes on that fair, half-naked form.
She trembles, and her soul seems quivering strange.
Hath she ne'er gazed on human limbs before?
Or is it that the beauty of this youth
Is more delicious than her mighty sphere?
Gods woo her, but in vain; and once a day
Earth clasps her for a moment, but no more.

They are but as a sister and a brother,
Pure, loving, tender, honest, and severe.
But, see ! she from her azure world descends,
Clothed as angelic maiden, and her face
Seems, even in its soft, ethereal beauty,
To have a dazzling radiance like the moon's,
She floateth o'er him, and that marvellous face
Hath a great sadness, and her large blue eyes
Are full of heavenly tears. Why doth she weep ?
Is't that she would he were a god, or she

• A humble maiden; and she loveth him—
She the bright queen of Heaven ; and he
A shepherd lad. And as she watches him,
Passions break through her consecrated vows,
And she stoops closer, till she drinks his breath,
Which but adds fire ; and her lovely lips
Press with enthusiastic joy his own.
He wakes not, but he fancies that his soul
Is being wafted, on a perfumed breeze,
Through a soft region of exquisite bliss.
His breath comes in quick gasps, and all his frame
Trembles with feelings supernatural.
He is in a delicious trance, and she
Watches him, and her snowy bosom heaves
With deep emotions ; and around his form
She twineth her white arms, and on her breast
The golden-headed boy reposes.

IDA.

YE who have loved, and who with heavy sigh
Have seen all bliss depart and sink in gloom ;
Ye who have watch'd the sweetly-drooping eye,
Ye who have kiss'd young modesty's bright
bloom ;
Ye who have seen your hopes of glory die,
Ye who have follow'd loved ones to the tomb,—
List to my strain, 'tis of a love that shone
When days were brighter and the world more
young.

She was a rich and noble lady, I
One of the many ; but the world doth prove
That truly as love rules yon azure sky
E'en so this mighty world is ruled by love :
Bright essence of sweet immortality,
Great star of Heaven, fair spirit from above !
Thou glorious ray of that eternal bliss,—
Thou Heaven-created god of happiness !

Where did it end ? Ah, transitory flame !
Oh, beauteous beam of an ethereal light,
View'd on the verge of Heaven, ere thy name
Is utter'd, thou art hidden from the sight.

Though after thee the wild and throbbing brain
Wanders, it cannot comprehend thy flight ;
For thou departest, and great tears are shed,
And yet we weep, and love, and thou art dead.

Her people deem'd not, as we turned our lays
Beneath the quiet shade of whispering trees,
That minstrel's looks and softly-whisper'd praise
Could have aught other meaning than to
please ;
Yet in each other's eyes, as flew the days,
We read sweet secrets ; and the rustling leaves
Made melody while we confess'd our love,
And bore it sweetly on the blue above.

Oh, she was beautiful, as fair a thing
As mortal eye could hope to gaze upon ;
A creature whose glad smile would instant bring
Unto the heart great longings ; she was one
A soul would die for, so that it might sing
Her praises up in Heaven ; her beauty shone
Like some fair planet set in the blue sky,
Or like a soul that glistens from the eye.

Her hair was of that tinted, golden hue
Which oft at sunset tips the snow-white cloud ;
Her eyes were large and deep as they were blue,
Her mouth well chisell'd, but perhaps too proud.

And yet I love such mouths, because too few
 Are seen with lovely women : they will shroud
 Their bitterest thoughts in masks of satin, gold,
 Or aught that is, so they appear not cold.

The radiant beauty of her face's charm
 Broke o'er the dazzled senses like a dream,
 Filling the beating heart with strange alarm,
 As though the soul gazed on some splendid
 scene

That was not of the earth—great glories swarm
 Incessantly of fondest joys supreme !
 Her orbs alone, her wondrous gleaming eyes,
 Would lure bright seraphim from fondest skies.

Oft would I sit as one who in a dream
 Fondly imagines all creations lie
 Around his feet, while he, the God-supreme,
 Through wild romance and mirror'd fancies fly ;
 And everything in Nature poor doth seem,
 A pleasing shadow to his dazzled eye !—
 E'en so my love, 'twas as a burning coal,
 Consuming heart, intelligence, and soul.

And as the sun sinks slowly in the West,
 And darkening shadows overspread the sky,
 And weary souls preparing are for rest,
 And lovers, hand in hand, go wandering by,

And gaze into each other's orbs—the test
 That brings the blush and drooping of the eye—
 The head bent gently, the encircling arm
 Adds to the picture, and completes the charm,—

Well I remember, as the evening stole
 Across the sky, and hung its sable mask,
 I to our dear old tryst, with thrilling soul,
 Would seek my Ida ; and the lovers' clasp
 Sent fierce, delicious feelings through the whole
 Of forms that could but with excitement gasp.
 And when the hour for parting came, the kiss,
 That wing'd us sweetly through the realms of bliss.

And we were happy, even though our love
 Was as a gloom to which there came no light,
 For 'twas not sanction'd by the gods above,
 And in men's eyes was anything but right !
 Love moves the universe, yet fails to move
 A single breast for love, when lives unite
 By greater bonds than laws—by souls, by hearts,
 By that sweet bliss which more than life imparts.

And yet 'tis *not* impossible that she
 Could in those maddening moments of great
 bliss
 Still cling with life to her sweet purity ;
 E'en though upon her lips the frenzied kiss

Might burst her heart with rapture, she can be
Still undefiled, wrapp'd in such happiness !
Methinks love can be pure, e'en though it may
Burst from the flood nor own paternal sway.

She was another's—"True love cannot be
In such connexions," will the world exclaim ;
Nor will it deign to think that honesty
Can reign with love, though in the midst of
shame.

Yet I'll not argue to convince—I see !
Life is less dear to some than their fair fame ;
And she I loved was not of that soft clay
Which being press'd, consents and falls away.

We parted,—'twas her wish : her will was law
To one who loved. Who heeds the broken heart?
Many's the town I wandering sought and saw,
Many's the eye that fix'd its flashing dart
Upon mine own ; but now a strange, dread awe
Of soft, sweet female looks has grown a part
Of my whole being, nor can I forget,
And yet remembrance bringeth but regret.

Fair are thy daughters, Spain ; the bright dark eye,
Shaded with lashes, glances gleams of light
That thrill'd e'en coldest hearts ; the soft, low sigh
That leaves the heaving bosom in its flight

I could have echoed once. Alas, now I
Am senseless to these dainties of delight !
No more for me can streams of pleasure flow,
No more for me is happiness below.

Oh, Ida, my beloved Ida, thou
Who wert the essence of this life, my soul !
Let mem'ry sweet glide thrilling back, and now
Make these long years of misery unroll,
And view us as we were. Upon thy brow
I press a long, soft kiss ; nor can control
The feelings that rush o'er me, and my breath
Grows weary, and I think of thee—and death.

They tell me thou art dead, and yet I see
Thee plainly now, as in the days of yore ;
For, sweetly turning back, dear memory
Ages retrace, and I again explore
Those charming scenes, O Ida, oft where we
Walk'd hand in hand ! Heav'n knows our
love was pure,
And that the Fates who join'd our hearts look'd
down,
And ineffectual smiled, for man did frown.

And are these things a pleasure or a pain ?
Always the two so closely are allied,
That to attempt to sever them were vain,
For one will die if t'other one has died !

Such is the course of Nature. I would fain
 Have always thy remembrance, tho' denied
 'Thy darling presence, and I scarcely know
 If happiness be sweeter than such woe !

Ida, my love, yon azure, sparkling sky
 Looks smiling down in glory, proud, divine ;
 And far into yon snowy cloud I try
 To view thy bright eyes, dear one, as they
 shine
 Above me, and my soul goes forth with sigh,
 And struggling pants yon pathway soft to
 climb,
 For I am weary of this lengthen'd strife,
 And care not now how soon I yield my life.

* * * * *

Aye, so through actions thoughtlessly begun,
 Hope sinks dejected in the breast of night ;
 Grim clouds of terror hover o'er the sun
 Of our existence, blotting out its light.
 By one misdeed our great world was undone,
 And therefore no misdeed will it set right !
 If virtue still remain, but luckless shows,
 The *virtuous* ones are virtue's bitterest foes.

TO ANNIE.

DEAREST and best, such thoughts arise in me,
That I could sing thy praises to the skies ;
If to the heavens my Muse's symphony
Were not afraid to cast its humble eyes.
Oh ! I would fill the air with tuneful cries ;
And glorious sights before the mind serene
Should float in such a manner, that their guise
Would dazzle mortals' most ethereal dream—
For I cannot express what I think thou hast been.

Bright be the day, and brighter still the life
On whom the sun in majesty must shine ;
Freed be that bosom from all mortal strife,
And may eternal happiness be thine :
May all the world seem pleasant, sister mine !
Ah, darling, could great wishes bring all this,
And I had reached that point to which I climb,—
I'd shower upon thy head such happiness,
That all the world would seem a gladsome heaven of
bliss.

High the bright moon in yonder azure gleams,
And lives, a thing exalted and alone ;
And yet there was a time, though strange it seems,
When this bright orb was to the world unknown :
God said, "Let there be light," and it was
shown,
And earth look'd brighter for its cheering rays,
For light upon the darkness had been thrown ;
And to this day, as oft we bend our ways,
We offer up to Him our humble hymn of praise.

The barque will struggle onward through the foam,
Though ocean torrents roar incessantly
Around her form ; the loosen'd timbers groan
As on the brink of some tremendous sea
She sinks, as 'twere, down to eternity :
Anon she rises, and her shatter'd sail
Happily flies before the breezes free !
While to the wave she tells the joyous tale,
That safety still is hers from its tempestuous gale !

Oh, had I some magician's mighty wand,
Whose mystic power before the owner brings
His heart's desire, I would o'er thee expand
A thousand glorious and delightful things.

Ah, what could be too good? The bird that
wings

Its flying course through the transparent air,
And 'midst the clouds its melody still sings,
Should not with your great happiness compare;
For if I had my wish, Heaven should not be more
fair.

Yet I am nothing—though I long to be

More than I am, if only for your sake.

Ah! dear, believe this, my sincerity:

Though I no worldly offerings have to make,

Yet if my life could save thee, thou shouldst take
The last warm drop that in this body lies;

For what is there upon this earth could break

My sadness, if you vanish'd from my eyes;

E'en though I were allow'd to view thee in the skies?

How strange this birthday is—this single day

Which marks our entry in this world of light:

Though all our other hopes and joys decay,

This one remains, still pleasing to the sight,

And on the mind leaves an impression bright;

As o'er the sky's dark face a snow-white cloud

Fleetingly flies, triumphant in its flight,

And of its lone position well is proud;

For it alone survives the sky's unpitying shroud.

The hopes that stimulate the beating breast
Are beautiful, while yet the life is young ;
But as the years creep on us, they to rest
Will sadly seek that place from which they sprung.
Noble ideas at their birth are stung
And resolutions splendid, by the aid
Of the world's withering and sarcastic tongue,
Which, in judicial ornaments array'd,
Deals judgment out to those who from its paths have
stray'd.

What care we for the world ? Beneath the skies,
And shining only 'midst its fragrant air,
Jewels gleam brighter than when countless eyes
Rudely upon their loveliness do stare !
The magic diamond with its beauty rare
Is found deep in the earth ; the pearl so bright
Nature has placed within the ocean's care ;
And yet to us these things are clothed in night :
So God and Heaven are near, tho' both are out of
sight.

Unless the mortal will his thoughts unfold,
We cannot read the workings of his mind.
With hardest stone is found the richest gold,
And oft a tender heart beats loud behind
A rough exterior. The face that's lined

With deep, fierce marks may have a spot that burns
With tender love,—great, beautiful, refined,—
Which for its darling object sighs and yearns,
Though all the festive world it without heeding
spurns.

Our Scriptures try to teach us how to love,
And likewise pave the path to worlds on high,
Where our great God looks on us from above
With feelings infinite, which cannot die.
Oh, if there's one within this world, 'tis I,
Who reverences his Maker; so along
With Him who rules Creation from the sky,
I place a being who should dwell among
His brightest hosts,—and she's the subject of my song.

All songsters have not mighty eagles' wings
To bear them far from earth in dazzling flight
Up to the sun, where seraph fondly sings,
Where they may warble in perpetual light.
A golden, blessed object meets their sight,
And though they fail to reach it, they may try:
For e'en in trying there is some delight,
Though all should end in disappointed sigh;
And so we hoping live, and living hope—and die.

Oh, may thy life henceforth flow on as though
No trouble e'er existed on this earth ;
May Heaven its blessings on thy head bestow,
For no one is more worthy of their worth.
Oh, I would change thy life into all mirth,
And joy upon thy countenance should beam,
And thou wouldest bless the hour that gave thee
birth,
For life should pass as one long, pleasant dream,
And then thy soul should rise to that ethereal scene.



DEATH.

METHOUGHT I lay upon a couch of woe,
Struck down with fierce disease ; my wasted form
Scarce vigour bore enough to draw slow breath !
I knew that I was dying, and I felt
A strangeness, like a flood of melancholy,
Sweep o'er my languid soul. The air grew dense,
And seemed most full of life, and countless forms
I knew were there, though they invisible
Were unto me ; and yet methought the whole
Might be but fancy of o'ertaxèd brain :
And I did lay expectant, and await
For those mysterious and indefinite forms
To all unfold themselves. And then the air
Seemed to grow denser, and with pain I gasp'd
To draw my little breath ! I knew the end
Was now about to come, and terror seized
My trembling spirit, and I moaned and cried
For life, dear life ; my agony was great
And fearful, and in those few moments I
Ranged through a world of pain ! And then, methought
A beam of softest radiance o'er my soul
Fell like a breath from heaven, and the woe

That racked me was no more ; sorrow had fled,
And without pain I lay.

And then my eyes
I opened, and beside my couch there stood
A woman, young in all the flush of life.
Most beautiful she was, her amber hair
Swept round her iv'ry shoulders, and her eyes,
Liquid and full of love, seemed like two worlds
Of softest and unutterable bliss.
I held my arms, and with a cry of joy
She sprang in my embrace, and to my lips
She pressed her full, red, soft ones, and her head
Slow sank upon my breast ; and all around
There seemed a perfume of deliciousness,
As though ethereal censers swung in air
Charged with the breath of heaven ! My senses reel'd,
And for a moment strange sensations whirl'd
Through my excited and perplexed soul.

And now from off my breast she raised her head,
And with a gleam of triumph in her eye,
Whispered, "It is all over," and I gazed,
As one who gazes into some vague space,
And knows not what he thinks, and cried aloud,
"What is all over, and who art thou ? speak ;"
And mellowly she murmured in my ear—

"I am the Spirit of the Dead, the task
Is mine to soothe the pangs of death, and make
The human life ebb softly ! " I arose
And spurned her from me with the shrieking cry,
"Dost mean that I am dead ? " She answered, "Yes,
Thou art no more ! Feel all thy limbs—they're gone !
And this firm flesh thou seest, where is it ?
'Tis all a phantasm ! " I felt, and lo,
No part of me was solid, though all seemed
As it had been in life. Then on my face
I cast me down and wept, I know not why !
No pain was mine, no fear of aught to come ;
But one vague melancholy doubt, which took
Nor form nor shape of thought, most strangely filled
With gloom my aching brain. "Arise," she cried,
"And let us hasten on !" I rose, and asked
"Where go we now ? " and thus she answered, "We
Must seek the home of Death"—"And then"—I cried,
"And then Eternity," she answered low.

Methought she took me in her arms, and lo,
We seemed to speed through earth ! No love was
there

In that embrace, no passion glowed, no thought
Of bliss pervaded now my dullèd sense ;
Like a decayed and withered tree I seemed,
Sapless and dead.

On, and away we sped
Through wondrous regions of the centre earth.
Huge mammoth fossils, ranged in grim array,
Stood spectral-like along our path ; and gold,
And diamonds, and marv'lous precious stones
Paved our descending way. The spirit threw
A light before, and lit the endless vault
With clear though wav'ring rays ; and when my sight
Had grown accustomed to the wild, weird place,
The brain grew clearer and the tongue wagged free,
And I the spirit did interrogate.

“ Thou tell’st me I am dead, soon shall I know
The mysteries of the Hereafter, and
The sources of our life ; discover and
Explore the suns and moons, and read the fates
Of millions writ upon the comet’s face,
And view the throne of God ! Yet would I know
If that divine creation—forming man—
As written in the book of Genesis—
Be true, or but an idle allegory
Or supposition ? ” “ Thou shalt know anon ! ”
Thus came the answer in sonorous tone
Which made me start, and anxious peer around,
And yet I feared not, but continued, “ Oh,
Answer me, spirit, or whate’er thou art,
Is there material hell, or are our thoughts,
Our consciences, the instruments of pain,
By which we all shall suffer ? ”

Round it turned,
And more confronted me, and o'er its face
A cynic shade, half angry, half amused,
Strangely appeared : " And dost thou think," it said,
" That only good shall be thy portion here ?
Well know I that in highly cultured mind,
The pangs of thought would be most terrible !
But think, the millions of humanity
Who have no conscience !" " What of them ? " I
cried,
It answered not, but faster hurried on.
More did I ask of life, of things that be,
But answer gave it none.

On, on we went,
Still treading downward through the mighty earth
Into a vast eternity of space—
Into a dark and never ending void.
I closed my orbs of vision, as a child
Hides out the darkness in the dead of night,
When waking from unpleasant slumber, he
Sees fierce and horrid forms in gloom ! So I
Pressed hard my lids to shun the fearful air,
And closed my ears against the silent world.
At length a low and hollow moaning sound
Fell on oppressive silence, and I peered
And listened in the gloom. Then there uprose,

Away, as if upon the world's horizon,
A dull, yet wondrous light, to which we moved
With fierce velocity, and as we neared,
Harsh moans and groans mingled, a hideous song,
And drove the brain to fury.

We had now
Entered into a vast sepulchral chamber,
Which bounded seemed, and yet no bounds it had.
Around in great confusion countless forms
Lay bleaching, and the grinning skeletons—
Ghastly and horrible to gaze upon—
Would snap their fleshless jaws, and from the bones
Low, hollow moans would come. Around my feet
Lay million upon million of men's forms
Decaying and decayed, and o'er the bones—
Licking the remnants of humanity—
Crawled hosts of vermin : and a dull, pale light
Streamed upward from each form and showed the
scene.
And here and there ran numerous impish shapes
Clotted with blood, and howling with delight,
And tearing from the yet warm frame the flesh
And drinking blood and brains.

“The home of Death,
The end of all humanity,” a voice

Spoke harshly in my ear, "thy time is come,
Prepare!" And then I turned my eyes, and lo,
The spirit that had borne me to this place
Transformed into a fury—I beheld
A monstrous demon, which advancing, took
Me in its grasp, and with appalling laugh
Tore arms from out their sockets, limb from limb,
Broke quick my back, and drew my entrails forth,
And cast them to the vermin, and then hurl'd
My fragments 'gainst the grinning skeletons,
Which rattled horribly. Methought that I
Was flesh and blood, or if not flesh and blood,
The semblance of it, as the forms around.
I saw my members strewed along the ground,
I felt the clammy vermin on my heart,
For reason still was mine, and loud I cried,
"Whoever or whatever thou may'st be,
Conduct me to the judgment-seat of God!"
And all the ghastly vault the echo took—
"Conduct me to the judgment-seat of God!"

Methought the form then took another shape,
And slow advancing, seized the diff'rent parts
Of my torn body, and began to join
Them one unto the other, and I felt
Such pain, methought, that man could never know.
It gloated, "Thou dost feel a torture now?
Then learn some pangs that mortal woman bears

When she gives birth to life !” Amazed, I cried,
 “ And canst thou speak the truth ?” It murmured not,
 But bowed its head in answer.

It assumed

Somewhat its better shape, and unto me,
 “ I’ll lead thee to the judgment-seat of God !”
 On, on we went, o’er plains of skeletons,
 Which rose great masses in our onward path,
 And barred the way, but o’er them we did climb ;
 And some did turn to ashes in our grasp,
 Or passed to nothingness beneath our feet.
 The vault was formed of fleshless frames, the walls
 And roof glared ghastly to the eye, and all
 Was terrible to view. And then I heard
 A mighty rushing sound ;—the spirit flew
 Fierce howling from my side, and I was left
 Alone, ’mid worlds of horrors ! Shriek on shriek
 Escaped me, and was echoed through the place
 Most horrible and wild ; and then a wind
 Arose and smote the ghastly fane, and all
 The monstrous structure wavered, swayed and fell
 With crash like falling worlds, and I was lost
 Beneath its hid’ous ruins !

”Twas a dream—

Only an idle fancy, but, O God,
 As Thou dost love, have mercy evermore.

ODE TO MELANCHOLY.

I.

COME, Melancholy, come !
Thrice ever welcome thou—
Come with thy cloudy brow :
 This heart shall response beat to thine ;
This breast shall be thy home.
The star of hope has ceased to shine,
Welcome sweet mis'ry now.
Twine me a wreath of cypress dead,
To circle this my wearied head !
Come, we will join yon ghastly rout,
And press with agony the lips
 Of the grim being who doth ride
Pale horse of the Apocalypse ;—
 And o'er Hope's blasted plains so wide
We'll revel in death's song, and shout
Until the brain a fury takes—
And the wild heart beats low and never never
wakes.

II..

They say the sun doth shine,
And that the moon is clear,
And that the earth's divine—
I know not—but I feel
Wearied sensations steal—
I doubt—I hope—I fear.
Yon leafless tree, its withered form
Bends not beneath the shine or storm ;
Like a bleak ghost it seems,
In the chill air of night.
The pale and glancing beams
Scarce touch it with their light,
But round its forked limbs tremble as with affright.
Ah, better then, the angry wave,
Oblivion deep—the dreary grave—
Or aught that Death, Despair can give,
Than gloomy haunts above
With neither joy nor love,
Nor Hope to bid us live.
Doomed, doomed from thy unhappy birth
To be the scorn, the jeer of earth,
And set as nought amid a world of little worth.

III.

The powers of earth and air,
 The powers of sea and sky
 Wage 'gainst thee, war uneven :—
 What profits tender eye ?
 What profits mis'ry's sigh
 When clouds o'ershadow heaven ?
 Despondency, sweet thing,
 Come thou, my pillow share,
 Stamp on this brow fierce care !
 Come, all thy horrors bring,
 And let us one and all in hideous chorus sing.

IV.

Come, Melancholy, come !
 This breast shall be thy home—
 See, I will fold thee in a warm embrace !
 Thy lips are damp and chill,
 And yet they do not kill !
 Though o'er the vastness of thy blanchèd face
 Woe upon woe and horror do I trace !
 Thy lips are bitter—sweet—
 And pestilential is thy humid breath :
 Corpse-like thine eyes do glow
 As when two pale lights meet
 In home of woe—
 Amid the realms of Death.

V.

Death is a sweet thing !

A moment we are gone—

The turf lies o'er our head,

And sacrilegious tread

Passeth unheard !—Upon the breast

The worm sinks soft to rest !

The world goes on and on !

Pain can no longer sting,

Nor thought its mis'ries bring !

Thrice welcome then art thou

Since pain and mis'ry fly

From thy unhallowed eye—

Come, let me clasp thee now,

And print a love-warm kiss upon thy clammy brow.

VI.

Alone, am I alone ?

No kindred heart to beat accord with mine,

No kindred soul I own,

Unless it be, grim Melancholy, thine?

For thou dost round my heart thy sorrows twine,

Until the brain

With dizzy pain,

Floats in a land of spectres grim !

A land where all is dull and dim :

A land where breath of the divine
Passes in fitful tremors by:
Where every eye with tears doth shine,
Where every bosom heaves a sigh.
What source of fellowship art thou,
Grim thing of sable brow?
The heart, the brain have madly striven
Against oppression, but in vain—
Pang crowds on pang, and pain on pain,
And sorrows eat the soul:
Mis'ries on mis'ry roll!
Despondent turns the heart to heaven,
And finds, alas, that e'en Pity from there is driven.



PLEASURE.

(A FRAGMENT.)

A LAND of splendid sunshine where the day
In night's soft bosom sweetly melts away ;
A land where wandering zephyrs languid sigh,
And with sweet music fill the arching sky ;
A land of suns and moons, where love reclines
King of soft glances : where the luscious vines
Cluster in wild profusion, and the air
Doth some delicious inspiration bear ;
Where all the world glows with celestial light,
And night and day in am'rous smiles unite.

* * * *

But lo, o'er yonder town the sun descends,
And flutt'ring sinks, and light and glory ends ;
And from their tasks the weary workmen fly
To view the day-god ere he fade and die !
While down the stream the noiseless barges glide,
Borne on the bosom of the foaming tide ;
And soon the quiv'ring lights along the shore
Glow in the river, and the day is o'er.

The day is o'er for labour, but with cries
Of languid eloquence, mark Pleasure rise
From her lascivious couch, and shake her head
And yawn, and wish herself again in bed !
Around her fierce volupt'ousness is thrown,
As bright as dazzling rays of planet's zone ;
A being of enchantment doth she seem—
A vision of a wild and wanton dream !
Glows all her rosy flesh with fancied joy,
And in a moment countless vows destroy.
And then neglectful falls her golden hair
In strange disorder o'er her bosom fair,
Which wildly heaving pushes tresses by,
And mortals gaze, and madly kiss—and die.

* * * * *

Behold her as she moves with outstretched arms,
And clasps each mortal and unfolds her charms,
Presses upon his lips her burning breath,
And breathes into his soul the scourge of death !
And mark her eye, with soft yet wondrous might,
It seeks thee, holds thee with its wanton light ;
Thou know'st 'tis death, and yet that death dost dare,
And for such moments think thy life but fair ;
Nor canst thou turn aside from such an eye :
She smileth and you smile, she sighs you sigh !

* * * * *

Aye such and more affects the air of night,
And Dian pales 'neath artificial light ;
And all the planets to creation given
Sink in the smoky atmosphere of heaven.
Onward the river dashes to the sea,
And bears its load of earthly misery ;
A shriek, a splash, a parting cry, the shore
Recedes, the waters surge, and all is o'er.



TO A FAIR FRIEND.

THOUGH severed, dear girl, from the touch of thy hand,

Kind mem'ry glides thrillingly back o'er the foam,
And sweetly the soul on that far-distant land
Moves joyous and happy, its own fairest home.
I see thee, I clasp thee, and fondly I kiss
Those lips in a rapturous passion divine ;—
Ah, love, can that heaven be richer than this ?
Do seraphim taste such a glory as mine ?

Thou lov'st me ! ah, breathe it again, and again,
Confessions so sweet the fond soul never tire !

The heart burns and glows with an exquisite pain,
And seems in a beautiful flame to expire.

Ah, look in mine orbs with thy soft, loving gaze,
One glance, dearest maid, and a kiss—I am thine
For now and for ever—with bright soul ablaze
I soar into heaven a being divine !

Oh, beautiful vision, dear life of my soul,
Let me press thee with ecstasy sweet to my breast !
If we cannot the blisses of rapture control,
Let us lovingly sink on their bosoms to rest.
The world all its wonderful wonders may show,
And man's mighty genius successfully prove,
But for me, the pure depth of thine eyes' modest glow
And the fond clinging kiss, and the bosom of love.



FAREWELL.

FAREWELL ! No more I wish to trace
Fierce anger painted on that face,
Since thou hast struck the blow ;
Wild gleam'd thine eyes, and stinging hate
Order'd a loving heart to break,
And bade its bearer go !

Thee oft I'd hate, but when I try,
That hate, converted to a sigh,
But bleeds the wound again ;
Still, think not there can be suppress'd
Within my troubled, bleeding breast
A raging hell of pain !

Thou wert to me divinest bliss,
And yet I curse not thy falseness,
For thou wert from the sky ;
And never beauteous thing of worth
Could touch contaminated earth,
And its vast powers defy.

Ah, when in madness thus you spoke,
You dreamt not that the heart you broke
Had just begun to shine
With glory of a tender love,
Caught from the smiles of Heaven above,
Ethereal and divine.

I could not curse thee—No, no, no !
I would not even wish thee woe,
Or aught that here I dread ;
Ah, if within your breast you feel
One half the pangs which round me steal,
'Twere better you were dead.

The twilight deepens into gloom,
And sweetly bright the silver moon
Floats softly through the air ;
Oh, had I but the power to fly
To yonder radiant moon and sky,
And rest for ever there !

We little know how near, how soon,
That angel may pronounce our doom,
In his mysterious breath ;
We know not when the hour is nigh
When these weak forms shall wasting lie,
And souls meet God—through death.

Farewell again, a long adieu,
With sweetest love I breathe to you,
Though we for ever part ;
The storm's gigantic fury fled
With crushing violence o'er my head,
And left a broken heart.



SERENADE.

DREAM on, my love ; dream on, my love !
The stars are shining bright above,
And on her azure throne the moon
Reclineth in delicious swoon ;
The sweet winds sigh, and heaven is clear,
And thy adorer, love, is near.

Sleep on, my love ; sleep on, my love !
The stars are watching from above.
Thy soul, thy life shall be my care ;
Thy home these arms ; thy bosom fair,
Those lips, those eyes my only bliss ;
Thy smile my glorious happiness.

Good night, my love ; good night, my love !
Still shine Heaven's diamonds bright, my love.
Blow soft, ye winds ; and oh, ye beams !
Watch o'er my darling in her dreams ;
And kiss that radiant brow, and tell
Her lover watches,—all is well.

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